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ART HISTORY

Resisting the Latin infusion

By S. S. PRAWER

PETER PARET

The Berlin Secession
Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial
Germany

269pp. Harvard University Press.
£12.25
0 674 06773 8

Ever since the appearance, in 1972, of Rudolf Pfeiffer's pioneering book *Die Berliner Secession*, people interested in modern art and its relation to society have had cause to wish for a work that would utilize the private papers of the principal figures connected with that group, together with the official documents scattered in various archives, in order to tell its inner as well as its outer history. This task Peter Paret has now performed; and he has done it well enough to make every reader realize that the Vienna "Secession" is not the only group so named whose activities at the turn of the century deserve to be chronicled.

One point, however, must be made straight away: the author's aesthetic judgments on the artists joined together in the Berlin Secession - Liebermann, Corinth, Slevogt and the rest - are neither persuasively argued nor adequately illustrated. There is very little formal analysis of works and styles; paintings prominently mentioned in the text are not reproduced, while those works which are reproduced (frequently from the artist's own collection of graphics) fall, as often as not, to receive sufficient discussion. Of only two colour plates, one is devoted to a pastel by Liebermann, who occupies a central place in the story Paret has to tell; it is pretty enough, but the uninitiated will need more help than they here receive if they are to see in it sufficient proof that Liebermann may still be regarded as an artist of more than historical and institutional importance. Nor does the one (rather rudely reproduced) etching by Walter Leistikow bear out the large claims Paret makes for that unjustly forgotten figure; and I am sure I am not the only one who would want more persuasion than the description "magnificent variation on an ancient Assyrian frieze" if I am to admire the dull lithograph of an inoffensive-looking animal stuck full of arrows with which August Gaul sought to

celebrate the British surrender at Kut in 1916. We are, it is true, given some fine drawings by Slevogt, Th. Th. Heine, Corinth and - especially - Barlach; but an adequate visual accompaniment of Paret's argument will have to be sought in another book: Werner Doede's *Die Berliner Secession* (1977), whose more than 300 plates and art-historical introduction remain indispensable. It should also be said that it is not part of the author's intention to link artistic and literary movements, in the manner of, say, *Silkunst um 1900* by Richard Hamann and Jost Hermand. English readers will find Roy Pascal's book on literature and society under the Emperor William II, *From Naturalism to Expressionism*, an admirable and necessary supplement.

Secessions, as Paret defines them, are social and institutional processes, sometimes caused by aesthetic considerations and always accompanied and affected by such considerations. In the nineteenth century they can be seen as incidents in the struggle over the control of major exhibitions, which had come to play a crucial role in the life of European artists. Even when the salons accepted innovative works, abler artists, whether avant-garde or traditional in outlook, preferred to put some distance between themselves and the mass of their colleagues.

Splinter groups, called *Société anonyme* or *cooperative des artistes*, *Salon du Champ de Mars*, or *Münchener, Wiener, or Berliner Secession*, were formed to create their own forums and launch their own publications; in these ways they educated the public, stimulated demand for their works and changed the attitudes and policies of the art establishment, which throughout the Continent was either an arm of the state bureaucracy or closely associated with it. Often secession members not only exhibited as a group, but also worked together and shared specific aesthetic sympathies. As the Berlin Secession clearly shows, however, a common programme and close artistic collaboration were not universal phenomena - what mattered was the conflict between secession and salon or academy, between creative talent and the constraints of state patronage, between a taste for the new and a determination to stick to what was old, tried and conventional.

What Paret's book gives us, therefore, is a closely documented and fascinating case-study of power-struggles in the artistic and bureaucratic world at the turn of the century: struggles between William II and his more enlightened cultural administrators; between the Prussian Academy and various seceding or competing bodies (often aided by official policies in German states and cities outside Prussia); between the leaders of the Secession and those whose work they exhibited or refused to exhibit; and also, of course, between the various artistic movements, in Germany and abroad, which the Secession furthered or sought to inhibit in the fourteen years of its official existence. We learn to know such representative personalities as Anton von Werner, the Prussian establishment's favourite painter and administrator; the artist Max Liebermann and the art-dealer and publisher Paul Cassirer, who were the guiding spirits of the Berlin Secession throughout most of its history and whose Jewish origins provided constant ammunition for their many enemies; along with a host of others, ranging from the courageous and enlightened Harry Graf Kessler to such proto-Nazis as Henry Thode, Arthur Kampf and Paul Schultze-Naumburg.

Liebermann, Slevogt and Corinth were known, to their friends and enemies, as "das Dreigestirn des deutschen Impressionismus", the "constellation" of German Impressionism - and Paret usefully defines for us what that phrase meant to men like Cassirer.

It tried to give a concise name to the manner they (the artists of the Berlin Secession) had achieved after shedding much of the realism and naturalism of their early years - a process that paralleled the development of the French impressionists but led to different results. *Flétn-air* painting was nearly as important to the modern Germans as it had been to the French. Their colours were less atmospheric, however; they placed greater emphasis on line and movement; and their treatment of human beings reveals a fascination with the particularities of the individual that is not equally evident in French impressionism. Still life, a major genre for French impres-

sionism, was less important to the Germans; it is almost absent from Liebermann's work.

But "impressionism", even so defined, will not do as a description of many of the artists who exhibited their work under the auspices of the Berlin Secession. These range, as Paret shows, from Corinth to Barlach, from Liebermann to the elegant cartoonists of *Simplicissimus*, from Kollwitz to Feininger, Kandinsky and Lehmbruck. In the early days the Secession's enemies had fastened on its supposed connection with Naturalism - a politically, socially and artistically highly suspect movement in the eyes of the Prussian establishment - to deny official honours to its artists; in later years they saw in its championship of the French Impressionists a sinister Jewish plot to subvert true German art. The master-mind of this plot, it seemed to such paranots, was the "profit-hungry" Cassirer, whose name lent itself to witless puns; he was thought to have formed an alliance with "Jewish" and rapidly expanding circles of aesthetes and stockjobbers on the French side of the Rhine. The result of this alliance of Germany's traditional enemies, Frenchmen and Jews, could be seen on the walls of German art galleries - Fritz von Ostlin described them, in 1911, in characteristic terms:

The French despise us to such an extent that their arrogance is turning into insolence. The most pathological paintings of van Gogh's insane period, the rejected experiments and barely prepared canvases from Cézanne's estate, have been acquired with pleasure by the good German simpleton. Today he is being told that the jokes of the publicity-mad Henri Matisse, whom the French themselves have long ago ceased to take seriously, are the greatest works of art; and tomorrow - tomorrow it will be the work of Picasso, the cubist!

History, fortunately, has its own way of transforming such diatribes into ironic commentaries on themselves.

The protests of Ostlin and other signatories of Carl Vinnen's *Ein Protesst deutscher Künstler* have become vivid involuntary testimony to the taste and foresight of the artists and art-dealers against whom they were

directed. One of those signatories was Käthe Kollwitz - but she soon came to regret her support of Vinnen against Cassirer. After visiting a mediocre exhibition of German art (she writes to her son Hans on May 20, 1911), she sought to cure her depression by going to the National Gallery. "I walked upstairs to the French collection, and as soon as I entered the first room - the one with the marvellous bust by Rodin - my heart sank at the thought that I had signed Vinnen's protest. For here I saw once again French artists represented by good examples of their work, and I said to myself that German art simply needs the Latin infusion." Paret makes clear, however, that Vinnen's misdirected protest was not simply the result of traditional xenophobia and antisemitism; he perceptively analyses the unenviable financial position of the majority of German artists under William II, and their sense of bitterness at being relegated to the ranks of the unfashionable. Vinnen, Ostlin and the rest attacked the wrong targets and offered the wrong solutions; but their protest did arise from genuine problems and grievances.

The *Berlin Secession: Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial Germany* places the Berlin Secession into the context of other artists' associations, ranging from the Royal Academy of Arts and its associated Verein Berliner Künstler to the *Werktätigenbund*, the Düsseldorf *Sonderbund*, the Wuppertaler association, and - at the very end of the period - *Die Brücke*; and a valuable chapter headed "Towards Expressionism" shows in persuasive detail how the rise of Expressionism necessarily spelt the demise of the Secession, despite the fact that many of the early masters of that movement exhibited their work under its auspices. Among the Expressionists whom the book discusses, Emil Nolde figures prominently; he does so in a thumb-nail sketch that demonstrates beyond doubt the pathological racism his hagiographers have attempted to gloss over. This account of Nolde's views not only corrects that given by the artist himself in his autobiography; it also performs the necessary task of showing some of the reality beneath the cosmetic fiction of Siegfried Lind's overrated novel, *Deutschstunde*. Characteristically, however, the author

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does not allow lack of sympathy with Nolde's views and personality to obstruct a just appreciation of his artistic achievement.

Our image of Nolde is not the only one corrected by Paret's documentation and commentary; indeed, the air around this soberly written book soon comes alive with the sound of exploding myths. The book refutes the belief that Käthe Kollwitz was passed over for official awards because she was a woman rather than because she was suspected of complicity with the sort of naturalism which the Wilhelmian establishment detested and feared in the early work of Gerhard Hauptmann and Arno Holz. It proves baseless the charge that the Secession was hostile to the work of Edward Munch and that the influential *Kunstverein* was monolithically, unreluctantly antisemitic. The belief, held by many who should have known better, that at the beginning of our century avant-garde painting in Germany went with social-democratic tendencies and democratic attitudes is shown to be as ill-founded as the converse suppositions that the Socialists were the only party ready to support modern art in Wilhelmian Germany or that a conservative Prussian traditionalist like Moller van den Bruck was bound to oppose such art. Paret's careful case-studies show beyond doubt how much opposition built up, even in artistic circles, to William II's artistic tastes and policies – and how fully the Emperor's egregious views on the function of German art and on the corrupting influence of "Secessionism" in fact reflected the views of the silent majority of his subjects. The old German fantasy of the "apolitical" thinker and artist was pushed more and more to the opposite extreme: the assertion that all art, whatever its subject and style, was ideological and demanded a political response. Paret shows most instructively that the founding of the Secession was, in the context of its time, a political act, and that it was immediately felt to be so by all those who dispensed state-patronage and controlled important exhibitions.

Unlike the better known Secession of Vienna, therefore, that of Berlin never enjoyed official patronage; nor did it ever evolve a unified and immediately recognizable style like the Art Nouveau or Jugendstil that flourished in Munich as well as in Vienna. It has therefore become overshadowed by the much more assertive, dramatic, outward-looking art of the Expressionists. Its most lasting achievement may well turn out to be that it made Germans receptive to the best in modern French art; but Paret's book should serve to encourage art historians and lovers of painting to attempt their own reevaluation of the work of Liebermann, Corinth, Slevogt and others. My own respect for Max Slevogt's elegant and witty drawings has certainly increased by leaps and bounds. It should also be impossible, from now on, ever again to mount an exhibition devoted to the cultural exchange-traffic linking Paris and Berlin between 1900 and 1933 – as the Pompidou Centre did in 1978 – in which the Berlin Secession was almost entirely ignored. The organizers of that exhibition seem to have had no inkling that, in Paret's words, "the secession was the most important institutional link between the fine arts in Germany and France during the first decade of the century" and that its leaders were constantly praised or attacked in Germany for their sustained effort to introduce French art, and French ideas on art, to the German people.

The Berlin Secession lasted just fourteen years (its first exhibition was held in 1899, its last in 1913) – the same span of time, that is, as the Weimar Republic which succeeded the Wilhelmian Empire. Many of those who heard Hitler's ranting, in 1933, about "vierzehn Jahre" of un-German, Jew-controlled mismanagement and depravation could not but recall similar attacks on the Berlin Secession. Indeed, one of the most sustained and vociferous of these attacks, Henry Thode's *Böcklin und Thoma* of 1905, speaks of *entartende Kunst*, art that furthers degeneration, in the populist and antisemitic spirit of those who converted the phrase *entartete Kunst* into a lethal weapon some twenty-eight years later. Paret sums up the argument that makes us see such connections:

The conflict between the secession and the forces of tradition in Berlin was not over the development of a new style, which is a matter for the individual alone, but over its acceptance. For that reason the fight for modern art and the forms that resistance to it took belong as

much to the social and political history of Wilhelmian Germany as to the history of German art. Despite the arguments of its opponents, the values that the Berlin Secession represented were German, but they pertained to a Germany that did not close itself off but sought its ideals in alien as well as in native soil. That for nearly fifteen years the secession maintained a forum for the German and foreign avant-garde, and won a small public for its works, constituted a victory in the war over modernism in Germany. At the time, both the supporters of the secession and its enemies regarded the victory as significant. They were right to do so, even in the end, after the decline and collapse of the empire and the destruction of the Weimar Republic, the war itself was lost.

This is, on the whole, well and justly said. Some of us, however, might not agree that the development of a new style is altogether "a matter for the individual alone"; and many, I am sure, who have had cause to admire the openness of influential circles in the German Federal Republic to modern art of all kinds and all nations will feel, as I do, that in the long run the battle so valiantly fought by the Secessionists has been won after all.

Peter Paret's enlightened and enlightening study contains many quotations from sources inaccessible to most readers. He has translated these into English without reprinting the originals; and one can only hope that such translations do not misrepresent the tone and import of the original text as seriously as the rendering of some characteristic verses from the humorous journal *Simplicissimus* which appears on page 148. The English version not only makes these verses sound much more anodyne and genteel by rendering "Jeden, der vor dir nicht spottet" as "All whose stomachs are not queasy", but also distorts or disguises two of the key notions that return again and again in contemporary criticisms of the Wilhelmian era. One of these is the notion of *Herflichkeit*, announced in William II's frequently remembered promise to lead his people towards "herrliche Zeiten", times of glory, of magnificence, of splendour. To translate that word as "beauty", as Paret does,



"From a Modern Dance of Death", a lithograph by Ernst Barlach (1870-1938) that first appeared on September 5, 1916, in *Der Bildermann*. Paul Casini's influential magazine. A native of Holstein, Barlach is best known as an expressionist sculptor, but he also published prints and plays under Casini's imprint – the latter had offered the artist a contract and an annual stipend in 1907. Reproduced from the book reviewed here.

is to miss its force entirely. The *Simplicissimus* piece which begins with this key notion of *Herflichkeit* ends with the complementary, deflating notion enshrined in the word *Theaterschund*. Official life and official art, it was felt, were not just trashy, but showy in a particularly theatrical way, from the uniforms worn by the Emperor and his entourage to the carefully staged historical paintings of Anton von Werner. To offer, as Paret does, "preposterous phony" as a translation of *Theaterschund*, is to miss an essential element, an element, moreover, which

reinforces his own argument: for if there is one thing the often so diverse members of the Berlin Secession had in common, before the advent of the early Expressionists, it is precisely their distrust of the theatrical element in the paintings of Werner, Piloty and a host of other artists whose works now moulder in forgotten cellars and in the unvisited galleries of provincial museums. That Liebermann, Corinth, Slevogt and their associates are not similarly forgotten and neglected, Paret's intelligent book will happily help to ensure.

quotes extensively from the seventeenth-century Chinese *Painting Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* which was not available in any European language until 1956 – and in any case influenced only those Japanese artists working in the Chinese style, who were very little known in Europe. Such excursions, though interesting in themselves, blur the focus of the book. The greater part of it is, however, given up to a thematic comparison of Japanese and Japanese art. Here Wichmann sometimes spoils a valid argument by over-insistence. A Van Gogh self-portrait, for example, is compared with a fourteenth-century Japanese painting, unfortunately of a type Van Gogh is unlikely to have seen. Similarly, in his comparison of Irises in Japanese and in late nineteenth-century Western art, he illustrates among the latter not the Japanese *Iris kempferi* or *retortum* but those which had blossomed in European paintings ever since the Middle Ages. Cats provide another motif and Wichmann illustrates not only Manet's famous print, which does show Japanese influence, but also a Danish porcelain figure which looks to me more like "the cat next door whom I have often met before" than any that provided in the art of Japan. In another section, on the vertical format, he discusses the influence of the long narrow *kakemono* on European artists but undermines a good argument by illustrating a fragment of Monet's huge horizontal "Déjeuner sur l'herbe" apparently unaware that this upright strip was cut off by Monet when most of the painting had been painted by damp and is simply a chance discovery, has the impression that the author merely played "snap" with two packs

of photographs – cheating now and then!

It was unfortunate for Wichmann that his book should have come out in Germany in the same year as Klaus Berger's rather more distinguished *Japonisme* (Prestel Verlag, Munich), and unfortunate that Wichmann's should have been the one chosen for translation. For Berger's book very clearly shows up Wichmann's weaknesses. It is much less lavishly produced but each illustration counts. Berger has less to say about the decorative arts, but what he does say is to the point. He assembles the essential information, telling us which examples of Japanese art were available in Europe, what was written about them, who their collectors were. He illustrates, for instance, the Japanese print that hung over Degas's bed, not even mentioned by Wichmann.

Careful analysis of individual works enables Berger to distinguish sharply between the attitudes of different artists, to show how much they owed to the European past of which Wichmann says very little and how much to Japan, and how far the first generation of *Japonisme* influenced the second. But what is more important is Berger's feeling for artistic quality, his tact recognition that it is more worth while to study the Japanese influence on Manet or Seurat or Gauguin than on artists of the stamp of Carl Otto Czeschke, Emil Orlik or Franz von Zolow. The vast range of illustrations which give Wichmann's book its value, especially for collectors of late nineteenth and early twentieth century trivia, is an obstacle to its growing purpose of demonstrating "the role played by Japonisme as a force that stimulated the development of modern art".

NORMAN DAVIES:

God's Playground

A History of Poland

Volume 1 – The Origins to 1795
606pp. 0 19 822555 5
Volume 2 – 1795 to the Present
726pp. 0 19 822592 X
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press
£27.50 each volume

Poland's history stretches over 1,000 years, and for at least 600 has formed an important part of the history of European civilization. The record contains greater fluctuations of fortune and greater political and cultural complexities than that of most nations. Polish states have risen and fallen, disappeared and been restored, and have been brutally mutilated and politically emasculated; but through all these changes a Polish nation has triumphantly survived, though its nature has not been immune to change. All nations' history is linked with that of neighbours and rivals, but the history of the Poles is intertwined to a quite exceptional degree with the history of the empires which have at times conquered Poland, and of the peoples which inhabited the border areas of those empires.

All this makes a survey of the whole history of Poland a daunting task. It has not been attempted by a single historian writing in English since W. F. Morfill in 1893. Several composite works in English have appeared in recent years, but all have suffered from the lack of coherence that is hardly ever overcome in historical symposia. The best recent single-author work in English, Piotr Wandycz's *The Lands of Partitioned Poland 1795-1815* (Seattle, 1975), is confined to a limited though important period.

Norman Davies undertook with this two-volume work a tremendous burden which none but he would accept. A yawning gap in Anglophone historical literature has now been filled, at a moment when there is unusually keen interest in Poland in Europe and North America. The book breaks between the two volumes – the completion of the historical Lithuanian state, huge territory extending from Baltic to Black Sea, in which the language of government for two hundred years was a distinct Slav language, the ancestor of the Belorussian language of today. This state was linked with Poland through a single monarch in 1386, and united in a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569. A member of the nobility of that country could be simultaneously a Belorussian-speaker, a Lithuanian and a Pole. The Lithuanian nobility in time became culturally polonized, but still thought of themselves as both Lithuanians and Poles. One such was the poet Mickiewicz, another was Jozef Pilsudski.

Poland until the Partitions was a multi-lingual multi-religious state with a single Polish nation limited to a social class. After the Partitions this changed. The non-Catholic, non-Polonophone populations gradually fell away, as well as brief sections on, six selected periods of crisis, and the last 250 pages are an uninterrupted narrative of the years since 1918.

The book is excellently supplied with maps, and there are useful illustrations, diagrams and lists of principal dates and of abbreviations. The only major defect is the lack of a full bibliography, or even alphabetical index, of authors and works quoted, mainly in Polish. In the reference notes, the short reading list of titles in English is no substitute. The Clarendon Press's decision to omit a bibliography follows the example of the Cambridge University Press with its *Collective History of Poland* which it published a year earlier. It is a sad reflection of academic standards that should feel impelled to petty economies which damage the value of their products as works of reference.

This is very much a personal book and therein lies a large part of its merit. Dr Davies writes interestingly and well. His moods vary between cool detachment, passionate involvement, and ironic comment. His range of sources is wide and imaginative. It

A nation and its neighbours

By Hugh Seton-Watson

includes quotations from memoirs and poetry, German and Russian as well as Polish. Excerpts from pre-1914 Baedeker at times greatly enliven his subject. Very few works in German appear to have been used, but taking the work as a whole he shows fairness and understanding in his treatment of the Polish-Prussian relationship which, as he knows but legend denies, was not all hatred and oppression. On Austria he is less perceptive, but arguably Austria was of major importance to Poles for only fifty years out of a thousand. In my view his best thematic sections are those on the nobility, the institutions, the cities and the Jews, while peasant Poland and the relationship between religion and culture, though by no means ignored, are not treated in sufficient depth. What is certain is that this book is a very substantial achievement.

An important point, made with some emphasis by Davies, is that the meaning not only of "Poland" but of "Pole" has differed during history. Today a Pole is almost always a Roman Catholic whose native tongue is Polish. Between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries one could have Belorussian or Ukrainian as one's mother tongue and yet belong to the Polish nation (*genie Rutenus, natione Polonus*). Membership of the nation, in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was a matter of social-political status. The nation was confined to the nobility, or gentry (*szlachta*), but this class was very numerous and included very rich and very poor persons. In the sixteenth century a large part of the Polish nobility (though not of their peasants) became Protestants, but by the mid-seventeenth century their descendants had almost all reverted to Catholicism, not through persecution but through the persuasion of the Jesuit intellectual vanguard of the Counter-Reformation.

"Lithuanian" too has more than one meaning. It could denote persons who spoke Lithuanian – the language of the original founders of the Lithuanian state, a language neither Germanic nor Slav but one of a distinct group of Indo-European languages. It could also apply to all inhabitants of the historical Lithuanian state, huge territory extending from Baltic to Black Sea, in which the language of government for two hundred years was a distinct Slav language, the ancestor of the Belorussian language of today.

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the call to insurrection, but was basically completed by the end of the century.

Nevertheless, though the composition of the Polish nation had been transformed between 1772 and 1918, the leaders of the restored Polish Republic still conceived Poland as the territory of the old Commonwealth, and did their best to re-create it. The frontiers of 1921, though less extended than those of 1772, still incorporated millions – amounting to about a third of the population of the restored state – who did not feel themselves to be Poles, but whom Polish governments, for all their nominal acceptance of the Versailles peace settlement, persisted in regarding as Poles. This was one of the fatal weaknesses of the republic between the wars.

The neighbours of the Poles in history have been Czechs and Hungarians (and the latter's Slovak subjects) in the south, Swedes in the north, Germans in the west and Ukrainians, Belorussians and Lithuanians in the east. With the Czechs there has been a long, melancholy succession of dynastic, ideological, territorial and economic quarrels, interrupted by brief periods of peaceful mutual indifference. With the Hungarians there were two hundred years of quite close cooperation, with common monarchs, common crusades and rather similar social structures and political institutions; and after each state was in turn partitioned the mutual sympathies of the two nobilities remained a minor factor in the life of both nations. The Swedish involvement resulted from the dynastic connections between the Houses of Jagiello and Vasa. It brought Poland little except devastation, but it lasted less than a century.

Polish-German relations have varied. The medieval Teutonic Knights were an uncomfortable neighbour, but from Casimir IV to Augustus II relations with German principalities were as often good as bad, while economic and intellectual influences from Germany contributed to Polish welfare and culture. Prussian oppression of Poles only became serious under Bismarck, but with Hitler (himself no Prussian) it reached a scale unknown in Polish, and seldom if ever equalled in the whole of human history.

It is arguable that of all Poland's neighbours it was the Ukrainians who had the greatest and most disastrous impact. The disaster was due at least as much to Polish as to Ukrainian faults, and it turned out a disaster for both alike. Whether in the mid-seventeenth century there was already an emerging Ukrainian national consciousness, it is impossible to establish; but religious and social discontent in the Polish-ruled Ukraine were deep and bitter. Whatever explanations are accepted of the revolt of 1647-48, of which Bohdan Khmelnytsky became the leader, it is certain that it set off the process which replaced the predominance in eastern Europe of the Commonwealth by the predominance of Muscovy. Dr Davies treats the date 1686, by which the loss to Muscovy of lands east of the Dnieper had become established, as more decisive than 1648, when the revolt reached its full fury; and in general throughout the book he tends to downgrade Lithuanian nationalism – though he certainly does not ignore it. What can be confidently asserted is that the events in the Dnieper valley in the third quarter of the seventeenth century had, and still have, consequences for the whole of Europe including England of no less importance than the English civil war, the peace of Westphalia or the peace of the Pyrenees. The conventional wisdom of Western historiography does not assign them such a role.

Russians have never been, and still are not, neighbours of Poles on the ground; but the Muscovite state has long been the neighbour or the master of Poland. To the relationship between the two states Davies devotes many pages and penetrating comments. Perhaps he underestimates one aspect, which we may call the reciprocal religious or quasi-religious dogmatism. Polish rulers from Sigismund III onwards showed less tolerance to Orthodox than to their predecessors to Protestants. The Union of Brest of

1596 was not so much a true reconciliation between two churches as the imposition of the Vatican's terms: the Union for this arguably lay as much in Rome as in Warsaw. On the Muscovite side implacable hostility had been unchanged since the repudiation of the Council of Florence in 1439. If Rome regarded the eastern church as a schismatic organization, which had sinfully seceded from the true church centuries earlier, Moscow had essentially the same view of Rome. To the Orthodox, Poland was the spearhead of schismatic Europe directed against Holy Russia. This attitude continued long after Russian Emperors had made the Orthodox Church a tool of secular despotism, and after Poland had been destroyed. A hundred thousand Polish soldiers in the invading army of the Anti-Christ Napoleon, 1812, reinforced the traditional Russian outlook. As Polish thinking became influenced by the increasingly secular thinking of Europe, Polish hatred and contempt for Russia took new forms: Russians were denounced less often as schismatics and more often as barbarians ruling a conquered cultured nation. The widespread nineteenth-century European view, that Russia did not belong to Europe, nor the Russians to European Slav culture, was possibly first formulated, and was certainly much promoted, by the Polish emigration.

A century later a transformed Muscovy became the inflexible spokesman for a new form of orthodoxy. The Central Committee of the CPSU, composed of persons initiated, over sixty years, into the only true wisdom by a form of apostolic succession going back to the exclusive and inflexible possessor of Marxist scientific knowledge, the great Lenin, remained the exclusive and inflexible authority on the meaning and the true interests of "socialism". In the age of the Brezhnev Doctrine any Soviet action could be justified by the interests of "socialism". This magic word denoted a condition of human

beatitude which, because it can never be defined, can also never be discredited. Whatever existing political and social regime is declared by the inflexible spokesmen to be "socialism", is "socialism", a "correct", "socialist" analysis, in terms of the sole valid criterion of "class", of any political situation anywhere. It is a condition which only the Soviet leaders are capable: all divergent analyses are by definition products of the "class enemy", "bourgeois nationalism" or "imperialism". It follows that the state, so often heard, that only Soviet policy is based on "class analysis", and "defends socialism", are unquestionably true, and always tautological. The Poles in 1982 find themselves at the receiving end of this dogmatism; and though there is nothing especially Polish about that predicament, it is probably true that Poles who remember their national history can understand it more easily than others.

The pagan of glories; ironies, tragedies, and absurdities which unfolds itself under Dr Davies's skilful guidance, offers food for thought to receptive Anglo-Saxon minds; and indeed Poles have often claimed that their history holds lessons for humanity. Three roles from the Polish drama may be briefly mentioned.

One is the Messianism of insurrection. Wherever revolutions for human liberty are proclaimed, Poles are likely to be found, together with those other non-potato-eating, non-wine-producing revolutionaries, the Irish: some Polish revolutionaries have believed themselves to be fighting "for our freedom and yours", others for international brotherhood as well as, or even in preference to, Polish independence. But when the time came that the government of Poland was triumphantly proclaimed to be based on the principles for which, each word denoted a condition of human

Turning to the East

By Hugh Honour

SIEGFRIED WICHMANN:

Japonisme

The Japanese Influence on Western Art since 1858
432pp with 1105 illustrations, 243 in colour. Thames and Hudson, £30. 0 500 23341 1

The cult of Japan which swept the West in the last four decades of the nineteenth century was an unprecedented phenomenon. Never before had European artists responded with such open-minded enthusiasm to an alien art. It was quite different from earlier exoticisms. And in retrospect can be seen to have marked the beginning of the end of a long tradition in European art, extending back beyond the Renaissance. Indeed, this was recognized at the time. "Well, it may seem strange to say it," wrote Theodore Duret, author of the first serious discussion of Impressionism (1878), "but it is none the less true that, before the arrival among us of Japanese books, there was no one in France who dared to seat himself on the banks of a river and put side by side on his canvas a roof frankly red, a white washed wall, a green poplar, a yellow road, and blue water."

Perhaps significantly, *Japonisme* coincided with a massive expansion of European political and economic power throughout the world. It was at the very moment when the French were establishing a firm rule in Algeria and annexing Cochinchina, when the British were advancing into Africa, crushing the Indian Mutiny and building the "Indian Empire"; that Euro-

pean artists turned for inspiration to the art of a wholly alien and undisciplined people.

Japonisme, as it came to be called in France in the 1870s, is of greater interest than might be suggested by the majority of its direct manifestations in the decorative arts. In fact it would be helpful to restrict the term *Japonisme* to Japanese influences on Western art and adopt *Japoniserie* or some other suitable word for its myriad expressions in the minor arts – the spindly what-nots, the imitations of Satsuma porcelain, and the screens painted with willow geishas and wilting flowers, which cluttered many a late Victorian drawing-room. Even in this more restricted sense, however, the cult of Japan is not altogether comparable to the *Chinoiserie* of the eighteenth century which had been an exclusively upper-class vogue. The nineteenth-century Japanese cult was "more than a fashion, it is a craze", W. E. Henley remarked in 1882; "the Japanese daddo has become almost a household word and the Japanese fan a household essential". There was a devotional song of the time:

Two-pence I gave for my sunshine
A penny I gave for my fan,
Three-pence I gave for my straw – forrin
made –
I'm a Japan-aesthetic young man.

Japanese art had been known in the West long before the mid-nineteenth century, of course – Jacques-Louis David, for example, as early as the seventeenth century, paintings or prints as early as 1812, when some were auctioned in Paris, and prints certainly by 1831 when Philip Franz von Siebold illustrated his book on Japan with engravings after prints from Hokusai's *Manga*, several volumes of which were on public display at Siebold's museum in

Leiden from 1837 onwards. But although there had been opportunities for European artists to see Japanese art, *Japonisme* was not felt until Japan was opened to the West, as a result of the trading treaty negotiated by Commodore Perry in 1854. (The Dutch only had been allowed a trading station at Nagasaki since the closure of Japan in 1638.) The first large exhibition of Japanese art was held in London in 1862, after which its influence is increasingly evident – first in work by Félix Bracquemond and the American painters John La Farge and Whistler, later in that of many French painters, notably the Impressionists.

Japonisme has been investigated by numerous writers, both in histories of Impressionism and in monographs on individual artists; several exhibitions have been devoted to it, notably that held at Cleveland in 1975 (with an excellent catalogue) Professor Siegfried Wichmann's *Japonisme* is, nevertheless, the first book published in English to be devoted to the whole subject. He covers not only painting but also the decorative arts, architecture and garden design, pursuing the history of "the Japanese influence on Western art" up to 1970. There are more than 1100 illustrations, many in colour; but one can only deplore the design practice of cutting out single figures from prints and reproducing them on a white ground. Wichmann discusses a very large number of artists in whose work he detects Japanese influences. He is especially enlightening on Van Gogh's drawings, technique and also on Toulouse-Lautrec. Much of his text is taken up with remarks on the symbolism of Japanese art, nearly all of which appears to have passed over the heads of Western artists; he also

quotes extensively from the seventeenth-century Chinese *Painting Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* which was not available in any European language until 1956 – and in any case influenced only those Japanese artists working in the Chinese style, who were very little known in Europe. Such excursions, though interesting in themselves, blur the focus of the book. The greater part of it is, however, given up to a thematic comparison of Japanese and Japanese art. Here Wichmann sometimes spoils a valid argument by over-insistence. A Van Gogh self-portrait, for example, is compared with a fourteenth-century Japanese painting, unfortunately of a type Van Gogh is unlikely to have seen. Similarly, in his comparison of Irises in Japanese and in late nineteenth-century Western art, he illustrates among the latter not the Japanese *Iris kempferi* or *retortum* but those which had blossomed in European paintings ever since the Middle Ages. Cats provide another motif and Wichmann illustrates not only Manet's famous print, which does show Japanese influence, but also a Danish porcelain figure which looks to me more like "the cat next door whom I have often met before" than any that provided in the art of Japan. In another section, on the vertical format, he discusses the influence of the long narrow *kakemono* on European artists but undermines a good argument by illustrating a fragment of Monet's huge horizontal "Déjeuner sur l'herbe" apparently unaware that this upright strip was cut off by Monet when most of the painting had been painted by damp and is simply a chance discovery, has the impression that the author merely played "snap" with two packs

of photographs – cheating now and then!

It was unfortunate for Wichmann that his book should have come out in Germany in the same year as Klaus Berger's rather more distinguished *Japonisme* (Prestel Verlag, Munich), and unfortunate that Wichmann's should have been the one chosen for translation. For Berger's book very clearly shows up Wichmann's weaknesses. It is much less lavishly produced but each illustration counts. Berger has less to say about the decorative arts, but what he does say is to the point. He assembles the essential information, telling us which examples of Japanese art were available in Europe, what was written about them, who their collectors were. He illustrates, for instance, the Japanese print that hung over Degas's bed, not even mentioned by Wichmann.

Careful analysis of individual works enables Berger to distinguish sharply between the attitudes of different artists, to show how much they owed to the European past of which Wichmann says very little and how much to Japan, and how far the first generation of *Japonisme* influenced the second. But what is more important is Berger's feeling for artistic quality, his tact recognition that it is more worth while to study the Japanese influence on Manet or Seurat or Gauguin than on artists of the stamp of Carl Otto Czeschke, Emil Orlik or Franz von Zolow. The vast range of illustrations which give Wichmann's book its value, especially for collectors of late nineteenth and early twentieth century trivia, is an obstacle to its growing purpose of demonstrating "the role played by Japonisme as a force that stimulated the development of modern art".

MUSSOLINI

Denis Mack Smith

"[An] excellent biography. It is a work of careful scholarship . . . it is difficult to see how it could be surpassed" – David Hunt, *Listener*

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On sale now £12.95

Wiedenfeld & Nicolson

The Leonardo of Lichfield

By Redmond O'Hanlon

scholar (Shelley: *his Thought and Work*, 1960), has succeeded, in his two biographies and now in this magnificent (and first) edition of the letters, in dragging Erasmus Darwin's large and various plan, highly supportive of all kinds of life, back into full view.

The youngest son of a lawyer who, he tells us, "passed through this life with honesty and industry, and brought up seven healthy children to follow his example", Erasmus was sent to Chesterfield School, where, as a letter to his sister Susannah about the deprivation of Lent informs us, one of his lifelong interests was already acutely developed. He warns her sternly not to eat meat, "but don't mistake me, I don't mean I have not touch'd roast beef, mutton, veal, goose, fowl, etc. for what are all these? All flesh is grass!" and, besides this, "Excuse me, I am not a vegetarian, but I am a vegetarian, supper being called; very Hungry."

He was already versifying with prolific gusto: "While snaky sausages their volumes roll, And hiss and spit before the burning coal, Then let the Ham's delicious Red be seen, Spread on the greasy Quintessence of cream

and sending poetic profundities to his favourite sister: My dearest Sue Oh lovely hue No sugar can be sweeter, You do as far Excel Su-gar As sugar does saltpetre.

He read classics, mathematics and medicine at St John's College, Cambridge, took his BA in 1754, and then spent two years at Edinburgh, the leading medical school in Europe; where, amongst more official enlightenment, as a contemporary remembered, although he was "fond of sacrificing to both Bacchus and Venus" he "soon discovered that he could not continue his devotion to both these deities without destroying his health and constitution. He therefore resolved to relinquish Bacchus, but his affection for Venus was retained to the last period of life."

After a further year at Cambridge he took his MB, and emerged into a world as well qualified as an eighteenth-century doctor could be—pitiably short of diagnostic skills, with no concept of a germ theory, armed only with a few simple treatments for almost all illnesses, with purgatives, emetics, bleeding, and a few favourite herbs. Yet in the hidden qualifications that really mattered were he to grasp the one opportunity for genuine success in eighteenth-century general practice—the relief of psychosomatic suffering—Erasmus Darwin was already toweringly well equipped. He was so obviously so very much alive himself, so impossible a target for a wasting disease, so massively energetic yet so directed in his enthusiasm, so persistently opposed to despair.

Uncowed, even after two months in Nottingham waiting in his surgery while not a single patient came, loftily comforting himself in "philosophical speculation", he arrived in Lichfield, the home town of Garrick and Johnson (the dictionary had been in print a year), bearing a letter of introduction to Canon Seward, whose house in the close was the centre of the city's literary life. A Mr Inge, a "young gentleman of family, fortune, and consequence", lay dangerously ill, abandoned by the local doctors as a hopeless case. As Anna Seward writes, "By a reverse and entirely novel course of treatment, Dr Darwin gave his dying patient back to existence, to health, prosperity, and all that high reputation, which Mr Inge afterwards possessed as a public magistrate." Thereafter Darwin's career never faltered, his reputation gradually becoming legend.

He married a "blooming and lovely young lady of eighteen", Mary Howard, moved into an old, half-timbered house in the close and transformed his garden, part of the original ecclesiastical moat. "The tangled and hollow bottom he cleared into lawn smoothness, and made a terrace on the bank... planting his steep declivity with lilacs and rose bushes." He became a familiar figure in the surround-

ing countryside, his carriage pitching and tossing along the rutted tracks, faithfully followed by an ancient horse called Doctor, on to whose back Darwin would heave himself whenever his sulky, luxuriously fitted with a sky-light, bookshelves, writing materials and a hamper of food, stuck fast. In fact, life on the slow move was really not quite as arduous as he presented it to Boulton in April, 1778, when apologizing for his inability to attend a Lunar Society meeting:

I am sorry the infernal Divinities, who visit mankind with diseases, and are therefore at perpetual war with Doctors, should have prevented my seeing all you great men at Soho to-day—Lord what inventions, what wit, with rhetoric, metaphysical, mechanical and pyrotechnical, will be on the wing, bandy'd like a shuttlecock from one to another of your troop of philosophers! While poor I, by myself, I imprison'd in a post chaise, am joggled and jostled, and bump'd, and bruised along the King's high road, to make war upon a pox or a fever!

He had every reason to be happy, and knew it. "For my own part", he writes to Albert Reimarus, a friend from undergraduate days, "I practise Medicine in Lichfield, Staffordshire, where I shall hope to hear from you... I have a good House, a pleasant situation, a sensible Wife, and three healthy children, and as much medical Business, as I can do with Ease, and rather more... Mechanics, and Chemistry are my Hobby-horses, but a Comparison of the Laws of the Mind with those of the Body, has of late been my favorite Study."

But at thirty-one, his wife, having borne him five children, died of liver damage brought on by excessive draughts of opium and spirits and water, taken, as she wrote in her diary, to relieve the "maladies of my frame" which "were peculiar; the pains in my head and stomach, which no medicine could eradicate, were spasmodic, and violent (it might be her advice), builds the greatest factory in the world. James Watt (and how different the distribution of several kinds of power in the nineteenth century might have been) is persuaded not to take his engines to the other player in the coming Great Game:

Lord, how frighten'd I was, when I heard a Russian Bear has laid hold of you with his great Paw, and was dragging you to Russia—Pray don't go, if you can help it: Russia is like the Den of Cacus, you see the Footsteps of many Beasts going thither but of few returning. Great schemes are laid, great canals are actually dug, and great intellectual as well as commercial results follow: geological and biological (time begin their vertiginous expansion; Darwin, pre-empting William Smith (who, like Henry Bates, Alfred Russel Wallace and Herbert Spencer, was a survivor for the navigation companies) realizes that strata can be dated by the fossils they contain. During the construction of the 2,880-yard long Harecastle Tunnel on the Grand Trunk Canal many huge bones were found, some of which Josiah Wedgwood acquired. Darwin, thinking of the same geological space which would one day enlighten his grandson, writes to Wedgwood: "The horn is larger than any modern horn I have measured, and

Darwin wrote to Thomas Day that his new wife was "possessed of much inoffensive vivacity, with a clear and distinct understanding, and great active benevolence; like myself, she loves the country and retirement, and makes me as happy as my nature is capable of...". And King-Hele adds approvingly: "With his second marriage Darwin's life—and letters—enter a new phase. He stayed at home much more, began writing books, and wrote many more letters." But being such a learned, vigorous, delightful correspondent brought its own special penalties.

Dear Edgeworth, You write short scrawling letters full of questions, which take up one line, and expect me to send you dissertations in return on academics—hot-houses, philosophers, attorneys, etc. etc.—and then, without being at the trouble of acquainting me with your previous knowledge of all these intricate subjects, you tell me, after I have been laborious in inquiry, that you know all this before.

And such natural exuberance was occasionally difficult to control:

Dear Boulton, Whether you are dead, and breathing inflammable air below; or dephegosticated air above; or whether you continue to crawl upon this miry globe, measuring its surface with your legs instead of compasses, and boring long galleries, as you pass along, through its dense heterogeneous atmosphere—as I am alive, now, I can not recollect how I meant to finish this long period, or here we'll leave it; and pray tell me how you do, and your wife and children and fire-engines. . . .

Nor was it kind to project such energy at the poetess Anna Seward, the "Swan of Lichfield", and then find better things to do:

You know not, dear Miss Pussy, the value of the heart you slight;—new milk have I in flowing streams to regale you, and mice pent up in a hundred garrets for your food, or your amusement; oh, permit me (his very afternoon to lay at your divine feet the head of an enormous rat. . . .

He deserved the thoroughly feline swipe he later received in his revengeful memoirs. But knowingly or not, the bulk of these letters are pitched on the heroic scale. The Industrial Revolution takes place before one's eyes. At Soho, which, as Darwin writes, "is the name of a hill in the county of Stafford, about two miles from Birmingham; which a very few years ago, was a barren heath, on the bleak summit of which stood a naked hut, the habitation of a warren", the one-time button-maker, Matthew Boulton, having married a heiress (helped, too, by some of Darwin's money and much of his advice), builds the greatest factory in the world. James Watt (and how different the distribution of several kinds of power in the nineteenth century might have been) is persuaded not to take his engines to the other player in the coming Great Game:

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And such natural exuberance was occasionally difficult to control:

must have been that of a Patagonian Ox I believe." But he was deeply impressed and, within three years, accepting the idea of evolution wholeheartedly, had the motto *E conchis omnia*, "Everything from shells", emblazoned on his carriage (until the objections of the canons in the close forced him to paint it out again). A powerful line of family thought had begun: every one of Charles Darwin's books (apart from the treatise on the *Cirripedia*) has its original counterpart in a chapter of *Zoonomia* or an essay-note to one of Erasmus's poems; and Charles's personal, provisional title for the first trial essay towards *The Origin of Species* was *Zoonomia*.

But these letters contain no hint of intellectual strain, no suggestion of dark stanic mists (although "The name of the engraver I don't know, but Johnson said he is capable of doing anything well" turns out to be William Blake). "The Botanic Society of Lichfield", after all, so industriously producing translation after translation of the works of Linnaeus and corresponding with every botanist in the land from Sir Joseph Banks to Dr Richard Pulteney of Blandford, is actually one Erasmus Darwin, a whole society, and more, in himself. And then there are the practical pleasures: on the grounds, "a little wild, unbragous valley, a mile from Lichfield... irriguous from various springs, and swampy from their plenitude", the eight acres of boggy land which he bought and gradually converted into a haven of rare trees, a secluded pleasure garden.

Darwin's range of interests certainly seems to have inspired his editor towards feats of similar virtuosity. He picks up his 1763 statement of the ideal gas law, which is usually credited to J. A. C. Charles a full twenty-four years later; his preoccupation of the law of partial pressures, which was formulated by John Dalton thirty-eight years after Darwin's discovery; and his 1781 Lunar Society bantering riddle that corn more, it seems to me, is contrary to orthodox opinion (of both the physiologists and their opponents) that water is not an element but can be decomposed, that one of its components is a gas, and that the gas is hydrogen, "displaced from its earth by oil of vitriol"—when sulphuric acid acts on a metal.

But King-Hele will also remind us, when Darwin writes with his newly invented Polygrapher (so producing the earliest document of which a perfect mechanical copy exists) to Charles F. Greville, hoping for his sponsorship, that Greville's habitual "liberality" lay elsewhere, to "unfortunates" like Emma Hart, whom he "rescued" in her teens, tutored in the social and the intimate graces, and then, when next in debt, made over to his uncle William Hamilton who married her in 1791, and upon whom she revenged herself two years later with a resounding victory over Nelson.

He annotates Darwin's medical letters excellently, too. The Devil,

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Edited by PETER WIDDOWSON
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METHUEN

Dynasty and degeneracy

By Kyril FitzLyon

W. BRUCE LINCOLN:

The Romanovs
Autocrats of All the Russias
852pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£10.55.
0 297 77917 6

The title of W. Bruce Lincoln's book is slightly misleading. The book is neither about the Romanov family nor about the autocrats bearing its name. It is a straightforward history of Russia in which the autocrats naturally play the leading role—from 1613 when the first Romanov, Michael, was elected to the throne of Moscow, to Nicholas II's abdication and the Imperial regime's collapse in 1917.

The author himself seems to feel the need to justify the title and, therefore, speaks not of Russia, but of "the Romanov state", "the Romanov society", "the Romanov order", even "the Romanov culture". Even the Russian legal system before its reform in 1864 is said to have had as its "primary goal" the protection not of the interests of the Russian class structure (let alone the Russian population), but of "the interests and prestige of the Romanovs and their leading agents". It is as if Russia had no history or identity of its own, but was merely an extension of the Romanov dynasty or, even more narrowly, of one man: the autocrat. This is somewhat reminiscent of the (spurious) Memoirs of Madame du Barry in which she claims she used to address her royal lover, Louis XV, as "France" *tout court*, there being no distinction between the country and its ruler. Such a personalization of history is unusual nowadays and gives the book a slightly old-fashioned air. But this does not detract from its readability and may even be welcome to some readers.

Professor Lincoln is well known to scholars of Russian history, particularly for his biography of Nicholas I, informative, penetrating and fair. So the reader opens Lincoln's latest book in the confidence that it, too, is shaped by these admirable qualities, but realizes fairly quickly that the author is badly handicapped by that unavoidable concomitant of academic competence: rigorous specialization. His familiarity with the Russian nineteenth century is not, apparently, matched by a correspondingly intimate knowledge of other periods of Russian history. A more serious defect, damaging to the reliability of his narrative, is insufficient discrimination in the choice of sources and a somewhat careless use of them. A hot entirely adequate knowledge of the Russian language results occasionally in curious mistranslations and may be responsible for a certain confusion of names and persons, wrong attributions, faulty definitions etc., admittedly more annoying to a historian than likely to interfere with the telling of the story.

In an excellent introduction of a very few pages Lincoln gives a panoramic view of Russian history up to the time of Michael's election to the throne. But since his interest in the Romanovs is limited to the sovereigns among them and then only in their capacity as rulers, he logically, but disappointingly, fails to discuss the origins of that remarkable family. In fact, he does not seem to be aware of the family's long-established social and political pre-eminence before it became a Royal dynasty, and places it below the upstart Godunovs whom he rather surprisingly includes among "the great boyar families", ranking with the highest in the land.

It can be said without exaggeration that the Romanovs' single main contribution to Russian history was the towering figure of Peter the Great: Michael's grandson, whose most able achievements belong to the next, the eighteenth century. The story of Peter's reforms is well known and needs not to be told twice, and it is a pity that an oft-told tale that Lincoln is probably right not to spend too much time and space retelling it. He does, however, fill the exciting story of Peter's successful and bloody struggle with his ambitious sister and with the armed forces—the *Streltsy*—who were

their support and whom he physically exterminated. Lincoln tells it well, but unfortunately, in one crucial way, stands the story on its head. The *Streltsy* (from the Russian *strelitsa*, to shoot) formed a corps of hereditary musketeers who, because of their inherited status and the special position they occupied, had a vested interest in the old order which it was Peter's ambition to destroy and, in doing so, to create a new army on the Western model. Lincoln, with considerable originality, derives their name from that of the German Duchy of (Mecklenburg-) Strelitz and dubs them "foreign mercenaries". This version, therefore, has Peter resisting the foreign element in the Tsardom of Muscovy and represents Muscovy or at least Peter's sister as being defended against him by foreign troops—a striking reversal of the role usually attributed to Peter in Russian history.

Peter's army reforms are as a rule considered to have been a success, resulting, first, in the defeat of Europe's most gifted soldier at the time, Charles the Great of Sweden, and then in the elimination of Sweden as the main power in the North. Eventually, and in later reigns, they can be said to have contributed to the defeat of Frederick the Great and of Napoleon. However, this is not Professor Lincoln's view. He ascribes Russian military successes at any time

exclusively to the weather: "As would happen with the armies of Napoleon in 1812 and those of Hitler in 1941, the Russian winter decimated the ranks of Sweden's armies long before they faced Peter's guns". A curious statement, this, since Peter's victory over Charles at the decisive battle of Poltava took place in June and Napoleon's army which set out on its Russian campaign in June began its retreat from Moscow in October in exceptionally mild weather; by the time winter struck it, or rather its remnants, had very nearly reached Poland in its flight westwards.

The period between Peter's death in 1725 and the accession of Catherine the Great in 1762 is one of the most confused in Russian history, partly as a result of Peter's law of succession which abolished the hereditary principle. Henceforth the throne was in theory to be occupied by whomever the reigning sovereign appointed in his own lifetime as his successor. In practice, the throne was taken over by whoever had the power or opportunity to do so—four women and three men (including two minors) in thirty-seven years. Professor Lincoln triumphs over the difficulties and manages to present a lucid account without troubling overmuch about the accuracy of details. The same is true of Catherine the Great's reign, though he does seem to have excessive faith in such sources as Frédéric Masson with his fund of dubious and often untrue stories, including the familiar one of the *épouseuses* who tested the virility of Catherine's prospective lovers.

It is strange to read in 1982 the assurances made by the British government to Catherine's ambassador in England not only that "there could not be a more natural alliance than one between Britain and Russia", but that "all territorial gains made by the Russian Empire and every increase of its prestige in Europe could only be agreeable to the King of England and general advantage to Great Britain". In policy strikes more familiar note. The aim of it, in the words of Louis XV, was "to remove [Russia] from European affairs as fully as possible" and "to

it to fall back into obscurity". But by then it was too late, however recent Russia's emergence as a European power.

To show how skin-deep Russia's Europeanization still was Lincoln describes the execution by beheading of the peasant rebel leader Pugachev—an example among many of the author's readiness to regard practices common to all Europe as something essentially and exclusively Russian. Even the adoption by Catherine's successor, Paul, of the Germanic law of succession by which the Crown—as in most monarchical countries—was put on a strictly hereditary basis, is considered by the author to be something quite exceptional. In Russia, as everywhere else, the dynasty was set apart from non-Royal families however highly placed. Yet Professor Lincoln writes as if this was peculiar to Russia and as if even there this became the case only after Paul's new law "bestowed [sic] upon [the Romanovs] a unique position within Russia's state and society". He is amazed—without explaining how else the law of succession could work—that "all Romanovs, no matter how distantly related to the reigning monarch, became potential heirs to the throne". In his amazement he even seems to forget that the monarch's most distant Romanov relatives at the time were his own children. There were no other Romanovs.



A late eighteenth-century Russian walnut ivory chess set, to be auctioned at Christie's on March 23.

This tendency to treat anything happening in Russia as unique violates his otherwise interesting last chapter and makes his attempts to explain the downfall of the Imperial régime quite unconvincing. He treats society gossip as if it were a serious and objective psycho-social analysis and sees sinister implications everywhere. Society, he thinks, was rotten to the core. Why, the Emperor himself relieved his colds with drugs based on cocaine and the Empress relieved her stomach-aches with "opium" (mandarinum). Presumably unaware that these were the cures universally prescribed for such ailments at the time, Lincoln singles them out for stern disapproval as particularly vicious royal habits. He even believes the rumour (he seems to believe all rumours) that the "infusions" (camomille?) drunk by the Imperial couple were dangerous hallucinatory drugs, responsible, he tentatively suggests, together with "cocaine" for the Emperor's political unconcern. He regards all this moral laxity as typical of a society so depraved that even "pederasty, lesbianism and sadomasochism" were not unknown to it.

He is undoubtedly right since Russia was unlikely to lag far behind other countries in this respect, but in his denunciations of Russian society he is guilty of "suicide, murder, sexual perversion, opium and alcohol"—all were an integral part of life among Russia's avant garde! Generally, and specifically among the group of Russian intellectuals meeting at the flat of the poet Vyacheslav Ivanov—a high-minded Russian equivalent of the Bloomsbury group. Since, contrary to accepted practice, he does not quote any authorities for this extraordinary statement he cannot be accused of distorting his sources. He does, however, thereby cast doubt on the reliability of his history as a whole, especially a few of the impressively large number of footnotes to be found in the book. Indeed, the errors are so numerous that the irritated reviewer ends up by hesitating to attribute to a mere misprint Professor Lincoln's statement that Napoleon's island of St Helena was situated "more than a thousand miles off the south-east coast of Africa".

Luxemburg had stood, it soon transpired that the triumph had gone to the old enemy who, whether his name were Ivan, Peter, Nicholas, Vladimir, Joseph or Leonid, always had the same fate in store for Poles. Polish history is an eloquent warning to utopians.

The second is the "golden liberty" of the Commonwealth of gentlemen, in which the freedom, dignity and honour of the Polish gentleman came before all else. No gentleman could be arbitrarily punished or persecuted, not even in the name of true religion. On this foundation rested the greatness of the Polish state, the humane quality of the Polish Reformation and Counter-Reformation and the great flowering of literature and the arts in Renaissance Poland. In the sixteenth century the liberties of the gentleman were well balanced with statesmanship in government, prosperity in commerce and patriotism in the nation. In subsequent years all this declined, and Poland slowly came unstuck. Revolts and invasions swept the land, the treasury had too little money and the king's army too few soldiers, while private armies pillaged, magistrates set up their own states within the state, and the *liberum veto* could bring public business to a standstill. All this has been endlessly mused for foreigners, from Voltaire onwards. Yet in 1982 a moment's pause for thought is in order.

The gentlemen's Commonwealth was a very agreeable polity, but it lasted only three hundred years. Arguably a still more agreeable polity in human history has been the liberal democracy of the "north-western corner" of the world, giving freedom under law to all and a chance to exert influence and even power. It has existed less than two hundred years. It has been healthy enough to survive some invasions; and private armies have played but a minor role in its life; but it displays a confusion of semi-sovereign states within the state, not territorial but sectional—corporation

fiefs and labour union fiefs, whose use and abuse at times recall the *liberum veto*. Whether the balance between pursuit of private material pleasure and defence of the realm, against armed force or economic collapse, is much more favourable in the "north-west" in 1982 than in Poland in 1682 is not self-evident. Thirty years ago the glorious forward march of Western democracy was still axiomatic. As late as 1969 a seminal work on economic modernization was proudly entitled *The Unbound Prometheus*. In 1982 the horrid thought presents itself, that perhaps Prometheus was only released on parole for a century or two. Poles at least can testify to the ruthless patience of the ever vigilant vulture.

The third role in the Polish drama is one which the Western hedonist intelligentist, of capitalist or socialist stamp, finds hard to grasp. Mickiewicz's image of Poland as the Christ among the nations, crucified for the salvation of the others, smacks of melodramatic rhetoric, or even of spiritual pride. But the identification of the Polish people with the Catholic faith, for all the anomalies and infidelities which historians can uncover, has remained through Poland's millennium a mighty force, usually passive, sometimes vigorously active. One period of activity began in the summer of 1979. For the first time in history Poles from all walks of life could and did welcome in their country the Vice of Christ their countryman. Millions throughout the world saw on their screens how his compatriots received him. While in Western democratic Europe and America reports abounded on the decline of all beliefs, and indifference to old forms of liberty, the Poles stood forth as champions of both. Perhaps this was just another example of foolish romantic Poles out of step with progressive humanity. This is what their conventional wisdom told self-styled progressives. But it is just conceivable that the Poles have something to teach them.

Round the records

By Arnold McMillin

PATRICIA KENNEDY GRIMSTED:
Archives and Manuscript Repositories in the USSR
Estonia, Latvia, and Belorussia
929pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £42.20.
0 691 03279 4

Research into the cultural and political history of the territories which now comprise the USSR has long been hindered, especially for Western scholars, by, on the one hand, the general reluctance of the authorities to allow access to archival materials broadly regarded as sensitive (and the Soviet concept of sensitivity must be one of the broadest in the world), and, on the other hand, by a serious lack of published information about the whereabouts or, indeed, the existence of particular archives in a region which has been more than most subject to historic-political change and instability.

Professor Grimsted's first monumental volume tackled this second problem with reference to the metropolitan Russian area: *Archives and Manuscript Repositories in the USSR: Moscow and Leningrad* (Princeton, 1972), with a first supplement *Bibliographical Addenda* (Zug, Switzerland, 1976). Difficult though this brilliant, executed labour might have been, however, its sequel, *Archives and Manuscript Repositories in the USSR: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belorussia*, covers an area that has not only suffered the self-inflicted chaos of revolutionary upheaval, but which has experienced the full gamut of shifting frontiers, changing administrations, civil war, and foreign conquest. The ancient city of Vilna, for instance, has formed the cultural focus for at least four different peoples during the last five hundred years. Undaunted, the author approaches her complex task with high professionalism, steering a calm course through the often highly contentious history of these western-most republics of the Soviet Union thus opening up for scholarly re-

search a vast and fascinating new area.

The method employed will be familiar to users of the first volume in this remarkable series, and the numeration of the major sections does indeed follow on from it. After a brief introduction, Part II, entitled "General Archival Bibliography and Reference Aids for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Belorussia", provides a mine of background information, whilst Parts I-L are concerned with each of the four countries in turn. The parts all follow the same pattern: a carefully researched and cross-referenced historical survey is followed by a descriptive catalogue of bibliographies of archival literature; institutional directories; surveys of sources for specialized topics; archival related to archives; bibliographies of published sources, reports of congresses and symposia, studies of archival history, and reports on archival research; then comes a directory of archives and manuscript repositories, ranging from major metropolitan collections like the Central State Historical Archives to small provincial institutions, holding archival material such as the Pisk Regional Museum or the Greenshchikov-Old Believers Community in Riga.

The Appendixes to Parts I-L are remarkably comprehensive, offering an invaluable guide to such topics as archival organization, access, and working conditions; tables of geographical names (an immensely complex topic in this region); charts and maps of administrative-territorial divisions from medieval times (to 1978); and, finally, a glossary of archival terms with their Russian equivalents. The volume is completed by Part M, a preliminary bibliography of archival material now held in collections outside the Soviet Union. Here too the service to Western scholars is immense though, as the sectional title implies, there is bound to be a supplement in time.

Western scholars will still find difficulty in obtaining access to Soviet archives, but preparation for research can now be made with ease and confidence. Future volumes in this entirely admirable series will be awaited with eagerness.

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Erasmus complains to Watt, has play'd me a slippery trick, and I fear prevented me from coming to join the holy men at your house, by sending the measles with peripneumony amongst nine beautiful children of Lord Paget's. For I must suppose it is a work of the Devil? surely the Lord can never think of amusing himself by setting nine innocent little animals to cough their hearts up? Pray ask your learned society if this partial evil contributed to any public good? - If this pain is necessary to establish the subordination or (of?) different links in the chain of animation?

It does not make the Lord less generally culpable, but it does diminish the local argument, to be told that the eldest son commanded all the allied cavalry at Waterloo, that the second became a diplomat, the fourth Wellington's second-in-command in the Peninsular War, and the fifth an admiral.

Darwin's gentle hints to the Duke of Devonshire, worried about "a permanent redness" of the complexion, on the other hand, are allowed to speak for themselves - "Give a man unused to vinous fluids a bottle of port wine, or 3 pints of ale - what is the consequence? He loses his understanding, and becomes for a time an idiot". But it is startling to know that the friend inspiring Tom Wedgwood, then a young man of twenty-three oppressed by an obscure, probably psychosomatic illness, and the recipient of many of Darwin's compassionate or playful letters, is the twenty-two year old Coleridge; and that his current prescription for Tom is "a grain of opium taken every night for many months".

Lastly, alongside the public attainments in science and literature so impressively documented in this magnificent book, Darwin is to be admired



Erasmus Darwin (right) playing chess with his second son, Erasmus. From Doctor of Revolution: The Life and Genius of Erasmus Darwin by Desmond King-Hele (361pp. Faber, £12.95).

for mastering his own powerful emotions when they were in chaos, for preserving his intellectual flexibility and *joie de vivre* of ideas almost unimpaired, for retaining nearly all of his capacity to give energy to others, for surviving two ghastly shocks in his life: his eldest, favourite and most brilliant son, Charles (after whom Charles Darwin was named - and whose memory may well have helped to disillusion the second Charles with medicine and to nauseate him before operations), a medical student of nineteen at Edinburgh, already the winner of a gold medal for his clinical thesis, cut his finger while dissecting the brain of a child in May, 1778, and died a few days later in his father's arms. And his

second son, Erasmus, a lawyer with a neurosis about settling his bills which Darwin misdiagnosed as a trivial, lazy quirk, when forty, having made a frantic effort for two days and nights to conquer his mess of papers whilst refusing to take rest or food ("I cannot, for I promised if I'm alive that the accounts should be sent in tomorrow") rushed out of the house and drowned himself in the river at the bottom of the garden.

Still, a tranquil Darwin could later reflect: "The worst thing I find now is this d-n'd old age, which creeps silly upon me, like moss upon a tree, and wrinkles one all over like a baked pear." But then, as he admonishes James Watt, "Now I grow old and not

so well amused in common society, I think writing books an amusement - I wish you could write books, instead of having these confounded headaches, which you complain of!"

He died on the morning of April 18, 1802, characteristically exercising his huge gift for friendship, having just moved to the Priory, and willing (despite the "scrawled questionnaires" he received in reply) an unfinished letter to old Edgeworth: "We have a pleasant house, a good garden, ponds full of fish, and a pleasing valley... deep, umbrageous, and with a talkative stream running down it... I would have been worth the loss of whole litters of sucking pigs to have had him to supper."

points of the political spectrum. G. R. Searle defines eugenicists as those who believed firmly in hereditarian rather than environmentalist social philosophy, and this allows him to adjudicate the Fabians, and the Webbs in particular, to be merely users of eugenic rhetoric rather than committed believers. He thus sees eugenics not as the creed of experts and technocrats but rather of those who opposed the Liberal Government's social welfare legislation of 1906-14.

Would it were so simple. One of the problems with eugenics is that it cuts across the usual political divisions. Michael Freedman's work has shown that eugenics as a system of ideas was often found in conjunction with viewpoints labelled progressive. In this connection, Weinland points out that academics used Social Darwinism to support pacifist as well as militarist positions. It is not enough to dismiss eugenic ideas which crop up in unexpected places as mere rhetoric; rather, they were part of the intellectual currency of Edwardian and inter-war Britain and the problem is one of explaining how what we would regard as incompatible ideas somehow managed to coexist in many minds.

The fact remains that eugenics was not successful. It may be, as Webster comments, that it was overtaken by events, especially those in Germany, which created a distaste for programmes of eugenic reform. Or it may be, as Mackenzie provocatively suggests, that the fate of eugenics was sealed by the post-war settlement between capital and labour, in which case we may perhaps expect to see it re-emerge in the Britain of the 1980s. However it is also important to consider the manifold constraints on policy-making. Gillian Sutherland's essay shows that LEAs had the power to refuse to implement mental testing between the wars. They did so because in practice the introduction of testing was strongly associated with making secondary school places free; testing provided a uniform method of selection. But as she points out, many secondary school headmasters had unashamedly different notions of meritocracy and were concerned as much about "tone" as intelligence. Thus, a very similar set of prejudices to those which inspired the work of Burt in the first place played a significant part in thwarting the implementation of his ideas.

In the case of university-based geneticists there is an obvious simple institutional connection with eugenics. It was eugenics' money, including a grant made at the behest of Arthur Balfour, a keen member of the Eugenics Education Society, which endowed Pearson's chair at University College. Yet neither Pearson nor Bateson joined the eugenic programme for social reform. Nevertheless it is still possible for Webster to call Bateson a eugenicist. Part of the problem stems from the widespread use of the language of eugenics among scientists, politicians and journalists from all

behaviour within the human one. Ethologists such as Lorenz and Tinbergen believe that animals possess specific innate characteristics which can be understood, often by direct analogy with human character, on the basis of prolonged and sympathetic observation. Lorenz endorses the idea that "animals are emotional people of extremely poor intelligence" and effectively unites animals and men in a single theory of innate character.

Other essays in the book demonstrate how commitment to a particular vision of society often affects research methods and the way in which results are interpreted. The most notorious example is undoubtedly that of Cyril Burt, who finally went to the extreme of falsifying his data in order to preserve his social philosophy. Bernard Norton argues persuasively that Burt's admiration for Francis Galton, the father of eugenics, led him to rework the latest ideas regarding the correlation between "civic worth" (IQ in Burt's terminology) and social class. The result was a startling resemblance between Burt's 1961 paper on "Intelligence and Social Mobility" and Galton's work on "Natural Inheritance", published in 1869.

Darwinists and eugenicists also provided scientific justification for the existence of inequality between the sexes at a crucial point in the struggle for female emancipation. Carol Dyhouse shows the way in which popular assumptions regarding women's proper place and the shortcomings of working-class mothers led doctors and health officials to emphasize married women's employment outside the home and working-class mothers' ignorance, rather than environmental conditions, as causes of infant mortality. Brian Harrison argues likewise that the medical profession used its scientific standing in the community to legitimize ideas as to the physical and mental inferiority of women and their confinement to the private sphere of home and family. However, Harrison's approach to this already well-worked material is odd. It is hard to understand his decision to explore a series of questions regarding the effect of the feminist movement (defined largely in terms of the leaders of organized feminist groups) and women's health. One would expect, as Harrison finally admits, the relationship to be indirect and conclusive evidence thus hard to find.

From evolutionism to elitism

By Jane Lewis

CHARLES WEBSTER (Editor):
Biology, Medicine and Society 1840-1940
344pp. Cambridge University Press.
£22.50.
0 521 23770 X

The most comforting response to this stimulating and controversial book would be to conclude that in the end neither ethology nor eugenics nor any of the other biomedical theories it discusses came to anything, and that their proponents may therefore be safely regarded as cranks or eccentrics and marginal to the medical and scientific community as a whole. But this would be to trivialize ideas which, as these essays show, were widely voiced and firmly rooted both institutionally and socially among American, British, and German scientists.

The book gathers together a number of the papers given at the 1978 Past and Present conference on the origins of sociobiology. It would seem that the emotional commitment of the pioneers to their creed was comparable to that exhibited by sociobiologists today. They were after all debating the literally fundamental issues of man's origins and the nature of human behaviour. It is therefore not surprising to find, in the words of Charles Webster, that "revolutionary theory rivalled the scriptures in the degree to which it could pronounce on specific cases of conscience".

These essays emphasize the interplay between the biological and social sciences. As Donald Mackenzie comments, the boundaries between Victorian biology and social thought were unclear, and disputes about social policy were often carried on in the idiom of biology. This means that the problem posed by Webster in his introduction regarding the involvement of modern medicine and biology in questions of politics and policy must be squarely confronted.

The relationship is by no means simple. For example, John Durant's study of ethology shows how ideas about human society were first applied to the animal world and then returned to provide a biological rationale for

Painting the papacy

By John Hale

LOREN PARTRIDGE and RANDOLPH STARN

A Renaissance Likeness
Art and Culture in Raphael's Julius II
159pp plus 40 black-and-white plates.
University of California Press. Paper-
back £3.50.
0 520 03901 7

Addicts of the Renaissance Papacy are notoriously starved of sound and round biographies. "What a morsel!" plotted Gibbon, reaching towards the succulent career of Leo X. But he abstained, and, save for detailed studies of particular moments, others, too, have held back. As for Julius II (of contemporary *terribilità* and later Agony and Ecstasy) there has been little of substance to savour since the somewhat arbitrary helping served by Ludwig von Pastor in volume 6 of his *History of the Popes*, translated as long ago as 1896. The short commons are readily explicable. Popes played a multiple role. Rulers of a large secular realm in central and northern Italy, apexes of a faith, bosses of Europe's largest financial, legal and personnel-crammed bureaucracy, to follow their careers through a disparate mass of irregularly coherent documentation is a matter almost of piling *Life* against *Life*.

And no Pope (save, perhaps Clement VII and Paul III - similarly without a major biography) would exact a heavier toll than Julius. He faced novel challenges in all his roles, was possessor of a temperament inadequately described as formidable, and the master of cultural ceremonies that made Rome, at last, the artistic pace-setter of Italy.

One cannot but welcome, then, the appearance of a book by two established scholars - one (Starn) a historian, the other a historian of art - that promises to illuminate at least the extent to which a gracefully intelligent

and socially acceptable painter of genius, Raphael, could share the preoccupations of Julius within the expressive potential of a portrait. For the painting is not only striking but doubly innovative. In form it was the prototype of close-scrutiny, three-quarter length papal portraits, sending echoes down the years via Titian to Velazquez's masterpiece, "Innocent X". In content it set a precedent for the portrayal of the sitter as thinker. And in the long line of portraits of subjects ruminating, brooding or in contemplative mood, few match the pioneer work in its evocation of the activity of thought itself. It is legitimate, then, to wonder what might be passing through the sitter's mind, and what common world of ideas united pope and painter in a shared mood of such assurance.

The painting has been described variously, partly because the dirtied version in the Pitti chiefly drew attention before the cleaning and X-raying of the National Gallery's work in 1970 proved this to be the original; and partly because the picture was read in terms of "outside" knowledge of the pope's circumstances during the period, from mid-1511 to mid-1512, in which he sat for a drawing (now at Chatsworth), and waited for Raphael to work it up. For Julius it was a time of political and military failure, revolt within Rome itself, challenge from a French-sponsored church council, and dangerous illness. It was followed by renewed health and astonishing success on all fronts. So Julius's expression in the painting has been described sometimes as dejected, weary, the hands as "nervously twitching", the torso as half-slumped or bent; sometimes with an emphasis on the volcanic energy with which he is about to leap from his chair.

The image appears to me much steadier. The face, though powdered and sombre, is hale in complexion, and the self-enclosed expression is not conveyed in terms of strain. In contrast to the white fringes of ermine on the

hat and cape (*camauro* and *mozzetta*), the eye-brows and beard retain traces of more youthful colour. The torso is erect and there is no nervousness suggested by the large, well-fleshed hands. I get no impression that we are invited to see the figure as "ready to spring into action", as the present authors claim; the body's stillness is an essential complement to the activity of the mind. Moreover, Raphael's manner of painting contributes its own sense of well-being to the figure's off-duty dignity - as in the still-life delicacy of the ritual handkerchief, and the fat, rich strokes of the rochet where it flattens along the thigh and flows in rapid currents of strongly modelled pleats between the knees.

The authors - we are left to guess who wrote what - intend to make the portrait a point of entry into "the Julian world".

We mean to cross and combine different kinds of evidence and lines of approach, keeping Raphael's *Julius* in sight, but moving from it to the concerns of the culture around it, and back again. By varying the levels of analysis we hope to avoid the narrowness of purely formal, iconographical or "sociological" explanation, and to confront something of the sheer complexity of whatever men have made. By concentrating on a single object we hope to respect the integrity of the work of art, to resist losing it either in the high abstraction of a prescriptive period style or in historical detail.

Oliver branches, that is, are offered both to the proponents and the adversaries of the concept of art-in-context. And their promise is honoured.

The details that lend themselves to iconographical analysis are, indeed, milked for all the resonances they may have transmitted: the beard, the colour of the rings (the theological virtues?) the handkerchief (or consular/imperial *mappa*?), the acorn.

finals of the chair (Della Rovere emblems, but "they could also frame the princely and imperial callings of the pope in the expectation of triumphant renewal and universal dominion even at the brink of desperation and defeat"). One begins to scatter grains of salt between the pages as one reads, but this is perhaps a ritual and anachronistic precaution, because the authors, with care and ample evidence, evoke the synthesizing nature of a culture where everything could stand for as many other things as had been rendered in a socially acceptable artist's case - overheard in the company of those who read.

And Rome, after all, that still dilapidated and economically artificial capital-city-in-the-making, was Europe's central exchange of information: diplomatic, clerical, scholarly. In a city never before so excitedly self-conscious about the historical linkage between its pagan cellars and its Christian sky, the suffusion of papal with imperial notions was bubbled about on paper and from pulpit with every elaborate device of a newly relevant medieval encyclopaedia and an undimmed relish for allegory. As far as the meaning of things went - anything was possible. The authors are not failing in their duty if they take this for granted. Besides, they have two anchors that enable their book to ride firmly over the undulations of contemporary fantasizing. One is their definition of the extent to which the deliberate expression of individuality could be conveyed within the limits of a job (as true for that of pope as that of painter); the other is their definition of the ground rules for the first chapter of this short, packed book: "Raphael's *Julius* and Renaissance Individualism".

The second anchor is the formula that regulates the discussion in the

next chapter on "Roles of a Renaissance Pope".

The sense of continuity from the Roman empire not only legitimized papal claims to universal sovereignty and plenitude of power; it also ensured that, as the recovery of the literary and artistic remains of antiquity accelerated, the propaganda campaign waged in defense of the papacy would be increasingly clothed with the form and imbued with much of the spirit of imperial Rome.

A third and last chapter, "The Setting and Functions of a Renaissance Portrait", was added because of the special concern Julius showed (as had his uncle, Sixtus IV) for the embellishment of the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, and because the portrait was briefly exposed on an altar there some months after Julius's death. Since there is no evidence to show where the picture was placed then or thereafter, the quite likely suggestion is made that it was intended as a donation to the church of special significance to the Della Rovere (but why the apparent delay?). Otherwise the chapter provides information some of which can be usefully read backwards to extend the material in the previous chapters; but mostly it constitutes a separate study of a particular church, rather than the Church of which Raphael's subject was the superbly effective chieftain.

There is a lavish, excellent bibliography - itself a point of entry into the intellectual mood of the Julian world, and forty black-and-white plates. The style of the book reflects an over-awareness of the objections that might be raised to its approach, as well as the desire to deal briefly with its complexity. This, I suspect, will not make it easily accessible to some of those who could best benefit from such an approach. But it is still a book not only for, but which will create addicts of Renaissance Italy's most remarkable institution at its most intriguing moment.

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IS NOT A STYLE

Guest Editor Demetri Porphyrios

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Guest Editor Derek Walker

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Genteel gatherings

By Celina Fox

BAMBER GASCOIGNE and JONATHAN DITCHBURN:

Images of Twickenham
303pp. Saint Helena Press. £70.
0 906964 04 0

JOHN and JILL FORD:

Images of Brighton
383pp. Saint Helena Press. £90.
0 906964 02 4

Bamber Gascoigne and his team of industrious researchers continue their tour in prints of the more picturesque boroughs of the nation with the publication of what are, for all their genteel associations, guides to contrasting localities. The one was, as the author says, the ideal of *urbis in rure* and perhaps the most fashionable of the retreats from the capital; the other, a seaside resort which between 1821 and 1850 became the fastest-growing town in the British Isles.

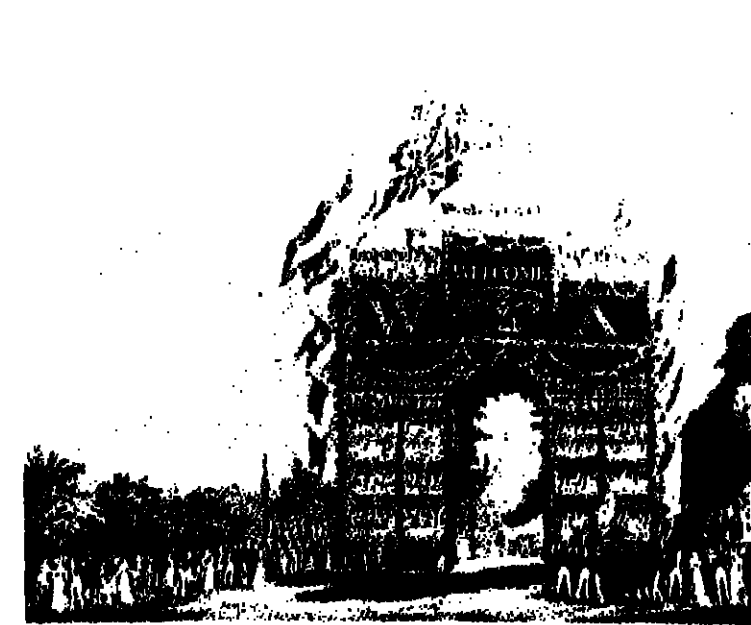
Each volume follows the pattern already established, commencing with a narrative composed by one of the district's residents or near-residents. Both the introductions to *Images of Twickenham* and *Images of Brighton* are suitably urbane in tone, sprinkled with laudatory conceits and quixotic observations. Here, a bay window is chastised for being somewhat obtrusive. There, the municipality is condemned for its undistinguished planting of trees, which destroy the unity of the prospect. Sometimes, reminders of a more civilized environment can still be observed. The Kemp Town esplanades in Brighton remain as the Fords point out, an attractive feature, "but inevitably in our graceless age, because they are open to the public, they have become the focus of graffiti of the most unenlightened kind". The Italianate lodge which Turner built for himself at Twickenham stands to this day, retaining "the interest of being an original Turner, even if heavily restored". But frequently, splendid buildings have been demolished; sometimes in the most philistine circumstances. The Fords cite the handsome Gothic National School in Church Street, demolished in 1971 during the postal strike, which prevented a government Grade II listing being received in writing by the council. After the last war, they relate, there was even a proposal to demolish Brunswick Square and its environs.

The main purpose of these works is to provide for the first time a comprehensive catalogue of all the prints of the district up to 1860, and any of special interest thereafter, thus forming an invaluable aid to the collector or curator seeking to identify a print without letters. The publishers, however, hope that the volumes will also serve a more general purpose. Through arranging the catalogue and reproducing the prints by subject, the intention is to reveal "as never before" how a district has developed. The authors trace these changes in the narratives: the additions made to Pope's Villa, for example, the schemes which led to the creation of the Royal Pavilion, and the alterations to the Chain Pier, damaged only a year after its construction in the so-called Brighton Storm of 1824. Describing two prints of Lady Howe with its cast-iron pavilion, Gascoigne notes with satisfaction their perfect agreement as "a good example of the solid evidence which topographical prints can often provide". The Fords are more circumspect about the reliance that can be placed on such evidence, given the less-than-scrupulous code of practices followed by many printmakers of the time. It is difficult to understand a print without being familiar with the building depicted. Initially thorough plans and written sources, and dangerous to use prints as an independent source.

But such collections can throw considerable light on the operation of the print market itself. The most striking feature of the majority of the prints under discussion is the gentlemanly world they portray. Their message of elegant prospects, impressive houses and well-

dressed citizens was intended, presumably, to appeal to the owners of the properties portrayed and to serve as reminders to visitors of the charms of a locality. The Fords begin to explore this market in a thought-provoking chapter on the Brighton printmakers. The artists who drew the town ranged from seasoned international topographers like William Westall and William Daniell to local drawing masters who sometimes published their own work. Brighton was fashionable enough to attract the attention of leading London print publishers, including Rudolf Ackermann. Not only was he responsible for producing one of the most sumptuous aquatint volumes of the Regency period, Nash's *The Royal Pavilion*, but he also for a time set up a branch of his Repository in Brighton. The Fords draw attention to the superior-quality aquatints and lithographs which the experience and organization of London publishers alone were capable of producing. But their researches also invite questions about the qualitative strength of the markets in London and in Brighton, the relative spheres of influence, the interest London took in Brighton and the speed with which metropolitan fashions were taken up in the provinces.

The range of the Brighton book is altogether greater than that on Twickenham. Things happened in Brighton: storms, floods, beached sharks, wrecked ships, even rape (though the commemoration of this event, which allegedly took place in the churchyard of St Nicholas, is little more than a stock block, excluded from the main body of the catalogue). Furthermore, as the Fords point out, Brighton has always had a dual character, the working port alongside fashionable life. Fishermen's nets and the rabble of the town were hazards to be negotiated on a perambulation in the Steyne. With the coming of the railway and the day tripper, Brighton's amenities – the hotels, baths, theatres, libraries and so on – were pushed in cheap prints which could be produced in large numbers. Well-known characters like Martha Gunn became folk heroes, commemorated like in wood-engraving and Toby-jug souvenirs. Even so, some sights were not recorded. Despite the unavoidable inclusion of the



The Triumphal Arch which was erected in honour of the arrival at Brighton of William IV and Queen Adelaide in 1830, the year of his coronation. Lithographed by M. Gault from a drawing by E. Fox. The King and Queen remained regular visitors to Brighton. From *Images of Brighton*, reviewed on this page.

smoking chimneys of the ironworks in nineteenth-century panoramas of the town, there would appear to be only one print of the inside of the factory (and that in a trade directory, as a suitably impressive backdrop for ornamental urns and fireplaces) and none at all of workers' dwellings.

More irritating, for this curator at least, is the sheer lack of imagination exhibited by the majority of printmakers. They tended to flock to the same picturesque viewpoints and rarely stir themselves a few hundred yards to the left or right. For unusual angles and less contrived settings one has to turn to the more adventurous, less formal explorations made in the sketchbooks of watercolour artists. Indeed, the lack of reference to works in other media creates an artificial constraint, not present at the time and less than topographically useful today. Those nineteenth-century enthusiasts who applied themselves to forming collections of London views often commissioned artists to draw for them the views in between, the views for which satisfactory prints had not been made. In

Twickenham, which provided a haven for Marlow, as well as for Scott and Hudson, John Varley and his pupils, Linnell, Mulready and William Henry Hunt, as well as Turner, the gap is particularly regrettable. Some discussion of these artistic associations and, where necessary, the interrelationship between paintings, watercolours and the prints, would have helped to anchor the latter in a firmer context.

The production of the volumes has improved with experience (evidently to such an extent that the pilot London study on Richmond, of which no mention is made, will eventually be republished in a new version). Both works now have useful maps of the area and the reproduction of the prints is quite adequate for reference purposes. *Images of Brighton* includes a good selection of colour plates. By the time the smarter London suburbs from Barnes to Wimbledon have been covered, and towns from Edinburgh to Eton, may we hope for the contrast afforded by *Images of Manchester*, or Birmingham?

The facility of flamboyance

By Craig Raine

GEOFF WEEDON and RICHARD WARD:

Fairground Art
The Art Forms of Travelling Fairs,
Carousels and Carnival Midways
312pp. White Mouse Editions. £38.
0 904568 288

Fairground Art is a paeon to the pleasures of naming. Deliciously technical throughout, crammed with spartan facts and esoteric vocabulary, it is guaranteed to appeal to the Gradgrind in all of us. The Joyce who wrote "Hissack", the Kipling of "McAndrew's Funnies" and "Many Inventions", would have loved it. The rousing words were built up from half-inch, thick, yellow pine board twelve inches wide, tongue and grooved together, the top made a little wider to create a dome effect. Top and bottom sweeps were cut to bend and the noising was made on a spindle moulder. Twelve battens were screwed at intervals through the boards and sweeps. To secure the shape. "Quite. Put like that, you could practically knock together a merry-go-round yourself. Now that you know the nothing should be made on the spindle moulder. No sweat."

As against this real world with its workshop Esperanto, its "inlines, but-lins, drop shadows and shaded brush-work", in Manders' *Flamboyant Enigmas*, there is the world of the fair. The fair is a potent symbol of the mass imagination. On wheels and overlocking alignments or railway lines, roundabouts gather like the

crowned heads of Europe. Under a perspiration of electric light bulbs lies the gaudy plunder of the popular imagination – an imagination vulgar, rapacious, economically straitened. The fair, unlike the circus, has no real animals so that, although Weedon and Ward gamely discuss horses, say, in terms of realism, the illustrations show us an idealized, heraldic bestiary. The horses have no depth of chest. They are sleek and on page 21 there is a wooden pattern for producing metal castings of horse gaiters: "apparently the intention was to alternate stallions with mares on Savage roundabouts. However, the gyration of the ride suggested a hot pursuit, so to placate Victorian propriety the stallions were gelded and the pattern put into storage." After this early view towards realism, fantasitification took over and, for instance, horses became centaurs – half beast, half Baden-Powell. Bejewelled like an outbreak of boils, transfixed by gilded skewers, they cease to be animals and become declarations of greed.

The unrecognition of conception contrasts with the precision of making. The real poetry in this book lies in the painstaking exactitude with which the creative process is described and not in the products of that process. In his *Degas*, Ian Duldig reports the following aphorism made by Degas to George Moore: "Among people who understand, words are not necessary. You say hump, ha, ha, and everything has been said." The craftsman who is quoted in *Fairground Art* share the same unpretentious professionalism: "I need use just a bit of chalk on these great big roundabout boards – up on the scaffolding – next thing you'd see a

great big fig leaf and a lion." Yet if this makes it seem easy, Weedon and Ward also pursue the richly technical: the scenic cars were carved from yellow pine, built up in blocks, shot, glued and later touch nailed both sides with two inch oval nails. "One responds here to the chaste precision, whereas the popular imagination is both inexact and derivative. It's interesting to note, for example, how little the authors are bothered by plagiarism. But if imagery borrows from itself, instead of delineating life, the result is always artistic disaster. You can see this in even a great writer like Nabokov when he wants to write beautifully instead of precisely: he opens a casket from Hutton Garden and scatters a fiftieth of rubles in the general direction of beauty. But they're paste, with high-lights by Manders' *Flamboyant Enigmas*. In the end, then, one is disappointed by fairground art for the same reason. The objects reach for a facile poetry and one only has to compare these animals with the creatures realized by Picasso to sound their monotony. All the same, this is a fascinating, witty, accurate and economical, witty, accurate and made from humblest ingredients – the blade of a mallet and a few screws. Looking at the illustrations in *Fairground Art* made me think of the vision of heaven in *Pearl* with its unremittingly lavish monotony. All the same, this is a fascinating, witty, accurate and economical, witty, accurate and made from humblest ingredients – the blade of a mallet and a few screws. Looking at the illustrations in *Fairground Art* made me think of the vision of heaven in *Pearl* with its unremittingly lavish monotony. All the same, this is a fascinating, witty, accurate and economical, witty, accurate and made from humblest ingredients – the blade of a mallet and a few screws. 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Initial inlays

By Graham Reynolds

LILIAN ARMSTRONG:
Renaissance Miniature Painters and Classical Imagery
The Master of the Putti and his Venetian Workshop
223pp with 152 illustrations. Harvey Miller, £28.
0 905203 24 0

Even the most firmly established art forms can be undermined by technological advances, a familiar instance being the collapse in the demand for portrait miniatures as a direct result of the invention of photography. Perhaps less familiar, but equally decisive, was the effect of the invention of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century on the age-old craft of the illuminated manuscript. When the portrait miniaturists found their livelihood threatened, they had tried to come to terms with their competitor. They became photographers; photographic images weakly printed on ivory were coloured to resemble the authentic product. With a similar instinct for self-preservation the illuminators of the second half of the fifteenth century sought to combine their skill with that of the printer. Printed books with hand-drawn architectural frontispieces and initial letters were produced alongside decorated manuscripts on vellum and simulated that dying luxury.

In *Renaissance Miniature Painters and Classical Imagery*, a study which explores much new ground, Lilian Armstrong has examined and catalogued the work of two miniaturists, who acted as intermediaries between limning and printing in the heroic days of early book production in Venice, the 1470s and 1480s. Neither artist has an assured identification, and the author treats of them here as 'The Master of the Putti' and his

successor 'The Master of the London Pliny'. There is a wider consensus of opinion over the works to be attributed to the Putti Master, and on his differentiation from contemporary artists working in a related Paduan style, such as Marco Zoppo and Franco de Russi. The *oeuvre* of the Master of the London Pliny is reconstructed from work formerly ascribed to other artists, and from unpublished material, predominantly manuscripts, some of which were made for the Aragonese Court of Naples. Dr Armstrong sums up her discussion by saying that the identification of the master of the London Pliny with either Gasparo Romano or Jacometto Veneziano cannot be excluded.

The picture that emerges is of a workshop, or two, closely linked with workshops which supplied a number of finely printed books, embellished with decorations designed to transport the mind of the reader into the world of classical antiquity. The main device by which these masters achieved this was the decorated or historiated initial. The forms of the drawn letters are derived from Roman inscriptions, but are given a three-dimensional look by faceting, as though they were carved in the round; between or behind the strokes of the letters are references to classical themes. As his name suggests, the Master of the Putti frequently depicts naked children, riding on a dolphin, playing a lute, tormenting Pan. An important aspect of Dr Armstrong's examination consists in the identification of the classical origins of such subjects in cophagi and other sculptural remains. She traces to their antique sources the legend of Hercules, the scenes of sacrifice, the cult of Mercury, the images of sea-creatures, and emphasizes that the ever-present putto is the survival into the Renaissance of the young God of Love.

The authors to whose texts these decorations were applied included Cicero, Livy, Martial, Ovid and Pliny. Lilian Armstrong quotes E. P. Goldschmidt's opinion that the owners of these sumptuously produced books, prominent among whom were the Venetian families Priuli and Agostini, did not wish to have illustrated editions of the classics. The relation of the illumination or decoration to the printed text was one of general stylistic affinity rather than of specific commentary. Indeed, when one contemplates the balance and design of a *mise-en-page* by Venetian, Sebastiano Luciani, who in his forties was still so drawn to the great Florentine as to honour him with the tag, 'sine tuo lumine nihil est homine'. It was appropriate that the first demonstration of Sebastiano's art in Rome, the Farnesina lunettes, should include a 'Fall of Icarus' and no less suitably, a 'Fall of Phaeton'. These uneasy representations of scorched ambition are, as Michael Hirst readily admits, 'something of an embarrassment for the painter's admirers', since the artist has failed to come to terms with the technical and compositional problems posed by the Roman commission.

How far do the shortcomings in Sebastiano's first Roman murals signal a failure in his career as a whole? Not the least virtue of Hirst's book is that he faces this problem squarely and answers it triumphantly. Hirst's acknowledgement of Sebastiano's limitations is balanced by a warm insight into the painter's real merits, which the reader is skilfully persuaded to recognize in part or in whole in the later Roman paintings.

The core of any Sebastiano monograph will lie in his continual struggle to reconcile his Venetian training and his desire to emulate the sublime *disegno* of the Florentine masters working in Rome. The crux of this problem was his remarkable collaboration with Michelangelo. It was remarkable

both for its results - the Viterbo 'Pieta' and the Roman 'Flagellation' are works of considerable power - and for the fact that it happened at all. Michelangelo was not someone who suffered fools gladly, and he often reacted comparably to wise men. He was notoriously unwilling to tolerate workshop production methods, yet he provided a series of superb designs for Sebastiano to translate into oil paintings on panel and wall.

Certainly the problems of collaboration were eased for Michelangelo, as Hirst points out, by its being conducted at long range, while the master was in Florence and his amanuensis in Rome. And the first occasion on which Sebastiano tried directly to help Michelangelo to with a work of art - his preparation of the wall of the Sistine Chapel for painting with oil colours rather than true fresco - resulted in the older man abruptly severing their relationship. But Michelangelo would not have allowed Sebastiano to carry his standard into battle with the Raphael camp for two decades had he regarded the Venetian as unworthy. Indeed, Hirst makes a case for believing that Michelangelo's designs show him adjusting his own style to take account of Sebastiano's individual qualities. These qualities included not only his native gifts as a dramatic colourist, ranging from velvety sensuality to almost lurid power, but also his bold simplifications of columnar and cubic form.

The proper definition of their relationship had been hindered by the utter failure of Berenson and others to correlate the visual evidence of the drawings with the extensive documentation. Hirst's treatment of the problem, which I find almost totally convincing, builds upon the fundamental contribution of Johannes Wilde's studies of Michelangelo's

Michelangelo's man

By Martin Kemp

MICHAEL HIRST:

Sebastiano del Piombo
175pp with 204 black and white pictures. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £35.
0 19 817308 3

Any Renaissance artist who flew too close to the fiery sun of Michelangelo's genius risked scorching his wings. No one flew closer than the expatriate Venetian, Sebastiano Luciani, who in his forties was still so drawn to the great Florentine as to honour him with the tag, 'sine tuo lumine nihil est homine'. It was appropriate that the first demonstration of Sebastiano's art in Rome, the Farnesina lunettes, should include a 'Fall of Icarus' and no less suitably, a 'Fall of Phaeton'. These uneasy representations of scorched ambition are, as Michael Hirst readily admits, 'something of an embarrassment for the painter's admirers', since the artist has failed to come to terms with the technical and compositional problems posed by the Roman commission.

How far do the shortcomings in Sebastiano's first Roman murals signal a failure in his career as a whole? Not the least virtue of Hirst's book is that he faces this problem squarely and answers it triumphantly. Hirst's acknowledgement of Sebastiano's limitations is balanced by a warm insight into the painter's real merits, which the reader is skilfully persuaded to recognize in part or in whole in the later Roman paintings.

The core of any Sebastiano monograph will lie in his continual struggle to reconcile his Venetian training and his desire to emulate the sublime *disegno* of the Florentine masters working in Rome. The crux of this problem was his remarkable collaboration with Michelangelo. It was remarkable

both for its results - the Viterbo 'Pieta' and the Roman 'Flagellation' are works of considerable power - and for the fact that it happened at all. Michelangelo was not someone who suffered fools gladly, and he often reacted comparably to wise men. He was notoriously unwilling to tolerate workshop production methods, yet he provided a series of superb designs for Sebastiano to translate into oil paintings on panel and wall.

Certainly the problems of collaboration were eased for Michelangelo, as Hirst points out, by its being conducted at long range, while the master was in Florence and his amanuensis in Rome. And the first occasion on which Sebastiano tried directly to help Michelangelo to with a work of art - his preparation of the wall of the Sistine Chapel for painting with oil colours rather than true fresco - resulted in the older man abruptly severing their relationship. But Michelangelo would not have allowed Sebastiano to carry his standard into battle with the Raphael camp for two decades had he regarded the Venetian as unworthy. Indeed, Hirst makes a case for believing that Michelangelo's designs show him adjusting his own style to take account of Sebastiano's individual qualities. These qualities included not only his native gifts as a dramatic colourist, ranging from velvety sensuality to almost lurid power, but also his bold simplifications of columnar and cubic form.

The proper definition of their relationship had been hindered by the utter failure of Berenson and others to correlate the visual evidence of the drawings with the extensive documentation. Hirst's treatment of the problem, which I find almost totally convincing, builds upon the fundamental contribution of Johannes Wilde's studies of Michelangelo's

drawings. The book is justly dedicated to Wilde, whose room in the Courtauld Institute served for some years as Michael Hirst's base, at a time when the great man was too elderly and frail to use it himself.

Hirst's monograph contains significant elements of classic, Wildean art history: the careful evaluation of documentation (of course), together with the reconstruction of lost works and settings, and the methodical use of the evidence of drawings. To these he adds a more pronounced involvement with patronage and iconography, which, if not ignored by Wilde, were not central to his approach. Hirst's setting of Sebastiano's career and works in the context of Rome before and after the Sack of 1527 adds a welcome dimension, and reflects the gradual broadening of concerns in British art history.

Hirst's approach is not, however, limited to the mechanical application of art-historical methods. He reaffirms the faith of those of us who believe that at the centre of our discipline should be a passion and love for the seen object. He is particularly good on the fruits of the collaboration, writing with urgency, involvement and conviction, only rarely lapsing into jargon: 'Isoccephalic heads' is a particularly painful phrase. I entertain some doubts about his extraction of portraiture from the chronological survey of Sebastiano's career, granting it a chapter to itself, but the resulting chapter largely dispels these doubts. The 'colossal' portraits of the 1520s - the imposing 'Albizzi', saturnaline 'Andrea Doria' and imperious 'Clement VII' - are finely characterized in this book.

However, when we turn to other aspects of the book's organization, the doubts become more insistent. The greatest problem for the reader, as the author himself well realizes, is the

absence of a catalogue. He attributes this to 'an inadequate interest in provenance' and a reluctance to count copies. Neither of these seem to me to be acceptable excuses. The proper function of a catalogue in a standard monograph of this kind is far broader than the listing of provenances and copies. It embraces the description of condition, using all the up-to-date technical evidence, the full recording of inscriptions, arguing for their reliability or otherwise, full discussion of attribution, dating and content of all the works, together with arguments for rejecting the attribution of commonly accepted works.

We are all too familiar with overblown academic productions and it may seem churlish to criticize an author for compression and succinctness, but the quality of what Hirst does say convinces me that 147 pages of text (157 including appendices) is too meagre a ration. So much has to be passed over when we may be confident that Hirst could have provided valuable support for unargued opinions. A number of the sections have an airless quality. Important and in some cases virtually unknown paintings are squeezed into a corner of the text or footnotes. The sensitive 'Portrait of a Man' in the Manning Collection raises questions of attribution, dating, condition, original format etc, but it receives no more than half a sentence and four lines of footnotes. The lovely 'Wise Virgin' in Washington receives its due in neither the Venetian nor the portraiture chapters. Is it a marriage picture, as suggested by Shapley in the Kress catalogue? Or is it actually a Foolish Virgin, a seductress in the tradition of Venetian courtesan portraits? Her lamp, after all, seems not to be alight. Has the relief below Andrea Doria yielded all its secrets? Is it a form of pictogram of the kind popular at the

Milanese court? I at least can recognize the A (*ancora*) and R (*remus*) which might suggest that it makes allusion to Doria's Christian name. Is the drawing of 'Clement VII and Charles V' a *modello* for a propagandist engraving rather than a painting? Hirst's text leads one to believe that he can give convincing answers to such questions, but they are not recorded here.

The present volume is not, therefore, a self-contained Sebastiano reference work. The serious student will need to use it in conjunction with Mauro Lucco's extensive but erratic catalogue in the Rizzoli *L'Opera Completa* series (1980). And he will have to turn to Hirst's review in *Arte Veneta* (1980) for some explanation of why their attributions differ. Hirst's book is not self-contained in another sense too. It takes for granted a good deal of specialist knowledge of the period and of earlier scholarship (especially Wilde's). He assumes that we know why the Windsor drawing of the 'Flagellation' is by Giulio Clovio. He expects us to know what the office of the Piombo involved. He requires us to read his in-text quotations from the Italian sources, not always easy Italian at that.

What I am saying, in essence, is that what the author has provided is so good, let us have more and let him unbend more readily to an educated but unspecialized audience. The reader of this book is likely to be both uplifted and frustrated. Might we hope that Hirst will assuage that frustration in the future?

A 'distillation' of his multi-volume Michelangelo studies, Charles de Tolnay's *Michelangelo: Sculptor, Painter, Architect* (238pp, Princeton University Press, £11.70, 0 691 00337 8) has now appeared in paperback.

Phaidon's recommended choice of superb art books for Spring 1982

Anthony Caro

DIANE WALDMAN

As one of the world's foremost living sculptors, Anthony Caro's reputation has now become unassailable. In her thoroughly documented book, Diane Waldman investigates Caro's oeuvre, discussing his development and his relationship with other 20th century artists and movements. Illustrated with well over 200 photographs, this impressive book will be the definitive study of Caro.

330 x 298mm, 320pp, over 200 illustrations, over 100 in colour, 2 gatefolds £50

De Stijl: Visions of Utopia

Edited by HANS L. C. JAFFE

De Stijl (The Style) was the most influential art movement of the 20th century, determining the stylistic development of abstract painting and exerting enormous influence on architectural and industrial design right up to the present day. The book examines the roots of De Stijl in Dutch art and crafts, in furniture and other applied arts. It is the first comprehensive history of the movement.

280 x 230mm, 256pp, 148 illustrations, 68 in colour £25



Picasso 1881-1907

Life and work of the early years

JOSEF PALAU I FABRE

This is the most ambitious survey ever made of Picasso's first 26 years, written by a man who knew him well. Much unpublished source material is included - over 120 documents and documentary illustrations - with more than 1,500 reproductions of Picasso's early work; 250 of them not previously published. This, the first of three projected volumes to cover Picasso's life, will, when complete, become the authoritative reference for Picasso studies.

315 x 305mm, 560pp, over 1,500 illustrations, 350 in colour, clothbound in slipcase £95

280 x 230mm, 256pp, 148 illustrations, 68 in colour £25

The Arts of India

Edited by BASIL GRAY

This superbly illustrated survey of the arts of the Hindu, Islamic and modern periods of India is an ideal companion for the forthcoming Festival of India. Eleven world-famous authorities have contributed, under the general editorship of Basil Gray, making this the first book to embrace the whole Indian artistic tradition right up to the present day.

280 x 240mm, 224pp, 255 illustrations, 48 in colour, 2 maps £25

Luca della Robbia

JOHN POPE-HENNESSY

Sir John Pope-Hennessy's acclaimed study has won the 1981 Mitchell Prize for The History of Art, which is awarded annually for the year's outstanding English Language contribution to art scholarship. The Judges, Professor Michael Jaffe, Professor Michael Kitson and Professor Sydney Freedberg, described the book as 'a masterly and pioneering study and catalogue of the 15th-century sculptor, in which the eye of the connoisseur and the knowledge of the scholar are matched in inimitable fashion.'

286 x 218mm, 352pp, 232 illustrations, 32 in colour, slipcase £60

PHAIIDON PRESS

A moral cosmos

By Adam Mars-Jones

STANISLAW LEM:
Memoirs of a Space Traveler
153pp. Secker and Warburg. £6.95.
0 436 24412 8

Stanislaw Lem was a medical student before he was a writer, and some of that training still shows through in his fiction; not so much in its knowledge of technicalities as in its respect for and insistence on the human in a dehumanized environment. The patient, after all, isn't expected to conform to the diagnosis, and medical theory is constantly rebuked by results. However for Lem extrapolates from the present into the future, and however far into the universe he extends his speculations, he is exploring recognisable human possibilities. The settings may be cosmic, but the morals are terrestrial. How could they not be?

This volume contains the stories from the original Polish edition of *The Star Diaries* (1971) omitted from the English version of 1976. Though the translations, into American rather than English, are sometimes a little stilted, and this second instalment is altogether rather slight, these are heady drugs.

The space traveller of the title is Ijon Tichy, a genial amateur of theoretical physics, cybernetic congresses and Streptococcus wild life - for the conservation of which he makes an eloquent plea. When not actually dashing round the universe without apparent effort, fuel, or funds, in a one-man rocket-ship, he is the natural prey of that well-known type the Unappreciated Inventor, who calls on Tichy dragging behind him a trunk crammed with perverse innovations.

The various inventors in the book are never frauds, but neither are they the benefactors of mankind they imagine themselves to be; in their search for knowledge, they have more often than not transgressed the bounds of the human. Tichy himself only once makes a similar mistake, when on his eighteenth voyage he creates the universe that we live in (as he does too), the universe in which he does not exist. Tichy derives from this experience the patience with human limitations he shows in the rest of the volume. He has a soft spot for the gremlin in the machine.

Man tells his humanity short when he imposes an artificial order on flux, or when he seeks to avoid the consequences of his actions, or when he resists paradox instead of welcoming it. If the furor on the planet Beluria has adapted to an environment created by intolerable children, and now mimics a slothful egg, lying in wait for the next mischievous kick and then infecting the aggressor with its spores, it is not the furor which must change its habits. It is the turn of the children to evolve, towards higher standards of cosmic etiquette and eternally consideration. They must be human and humane; but never anthropomorphic, or less lazy inhabitants of the universe will quietly seize their chance. Do not feed the animals, least of all with yourself.

In its paradoxical and teasing way this is a highly moral volume. It is also very funny; Lem's command of convincing, jargon and absurd logic makes for consistently entertaining reading. Sometimes he strives for a

Reading from *The New Book of Nature: Physics and Metaphysics in the Modern Novel*, by Robert Nadeau (213pp, The University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 0 87023 331 9) is an analysis of the work of John Updike, John Barth, John Fowles, Kurt Vonnegut Jr, Thomas Pynchon, Tom Robbins and Don DeLillo which attempts to connect the themes of flux and relativity in these writers' fiction with twentieth-century advances in physics, and to clarify "the manner in which each relies on analogies and models derived from physical science and the attitudes towards reality that their use of such models conveys." After

frisson that is outside his range, as in the third of the "Further Recollections": sometimes he becomes merely whimsical, as when he provides his own drawings for a comic bestiary of the cosmos, thereby inviting a comparison with Edward Lear that works against him; and sometimes he goes off at a tangent, abandoning his original idea for another one. Even if the second idea is the better, the story suffers from the disjunction.

So in "The Washing Machine Tragedy" a fairly routine satire on consumerism gives way to a brilliant fantasia on cosmic law. A fanatic (yet another of the rightly Unappreciated Inventors) who believes in the superiority of robots over human beings turns himself into the privacy of the Crab Nebula into a pseudo-human entity hundreds of miles long, composed of robots who can resolve themselves into units, or alternatively form a small planet. The State Department must decide, if it is to come up with a plan of action; whether it is dealing with a human being, a robot, a government, a celestial body, or children. The possibilities multiply, and the fun increases exponentially.

Memoirs of a Space Traveler can be confidently recommended to anyone who would like *Doctor Who* better if it had wit, panache, intellectual high-jinks, unpredictability and a sense of play. Those who care only for monsters, high camp and conventional love-interest will be greatly disappointed.

By Saykar Altinel

JANICE ELLIOTT:
The Country of Her Dreams
186pp. Hodder and Stoughton.
0 340 27830 7

Mary Lamb and her husband Nicholas arrive in a communist country by the Adriatic for a conference where she is to select those works of art which should be moved to a lead-lined shelter in the event of nuclear war. She is a writer of children's books; he is a lecturer and critic. They are successful in their careers; they are very much in love with each other; and they have two nice grown-up children. They are, as one of their friends puts it, "obscenely happy people."

Almost at once, however, things begin to go wrong. Mary is convinced that although she has never been in this corner of Europe before, it is familiar to her from several disturbing dreams. This upsets her; she is right to be worried, for the country is in fact in a tense condition. The previous President, who had kept it non-aligned, and who is still referred to by everybody as the "Old Man", is dead, and both East and West are itching to move in.

Unknown to everybody, there are also terrorists about, and these soon manage to take the conference delegates hostage. The usual demands (freeing of political prisoners in West Germany, a plane to Algiers) and threats (shooting of prisoners, blowing up of the conference building) are made; but before any action can

chapters on "Common Sense and the Nature of Things" and "Metaphysics and the New Physics". Nadeau devotes a chapter to each of the above novelists, from the point of view of an example. Fowles' "construction of alternate conceptions of the real as an expression of that creative energy which is the life of the cosmos"; Updike's "concern with the correspondence between activities on the level of subatomic processes and the neurological processes in the brain"; and Pynchon's "elaborate fictional interconnections, which 'finally' expose a world in which the contrasts do not add up to a logically constructed universe".

Fast and forlorn

By Lucy Hughes-Hallett

JUDITH BURNLEY:
Unrepentant Women
216pp. Heinemann. £6.95.
434 09856 6

Judith Burnley's new novel is a kaleidoscopic study of widowhood. It is crowded with women, each of whom in the account of her history or the description of her personality, adds a few more fragments to the composite portrait of a woman who has outlived her man.

The narrative frame for this portrait is provided by a few months in the life of Sarah Cornish. Readers of Burnley's first novel, *The Wife*, will remember her as the sexy, self-possessed journalist who spends all night with her husband and all day with her lover, yet still finds time to write her quota of articles. More sober now, and less methodically adulterous, she is working on a series of interviews (quoted in full) with real-life *grandes dames*, all gallant survivors; she intends that they should provide inspiring "role models" for her female readers. Balancing them in her life, and in the novel's structure, are two of the sort of old ladies today's women are not supposed to become. They are Sarah's mother, and mother-in-law, both widowed, both pathetically devoid of the creative selfishness neces-

sary to make a life spent alone seem like one worth living. Sarah herself is married, but in the last chapter her husband dies and it becomes clear that the novel's true subject is something which begins only as the book ends, Sarah's own widowhood.

The novel's plan is inventive and intelligent, its realization less so. The New York feminist editor to whom Sarah attempts to sell her articles rejects them on the grounds that they are insufficiently politicized, pointing out that the "Fast Ladies" all "cared too much for men". The editor is celibate; in making her voice this criticism Burnley implies that it is a foolishly puritanical one, but it is in fact just. With the exception of the two writers, Anita Loos and Jean Rhys (and even she emerges as an archetypal feminine masochist), and the trade unionist Leonora Cohen, Sarah's chosen subjects are forlorn creatures growing old with only the memories of love-affairs or marriages to comfort them.

Sarah has three adventures, one with a Welsh squire, another with a beautiful New York lesbian and a third with an old boyfriend to whom she makes love in a haze of expensive bath essence, rustling silk, chinking champagne glasses and ecstatic passion - a haze suspiciously similar to that in which the authoress of pulp romantic fiction like to envelop their heroine's sexual encounters. These are simple wish-fulfillment fantasies, enjoyable enough, but according badly with

Coming to grief in the real

Mediteranean lands. But this derivativeness is openly admitted, and, indeed, emphasized. References to Forster abound; an allusion is made to Lawrence; there are frequent appearances by a Panama-hatted figure reminiscent of the straw-hatted man who follows von Aschenbach about in *Death in Venice*. All this is merely Janice Elliott's way of indicating where her sympathies lie. The knowledge of literature she both displays herself and demands from her readers is a part of her defence of culture.

We are left in no doubt that being happy, leading a civilized existence and worrying about what might happen to art treasures in a nuclear war are all irrelevant in a world which is actually violent and chaotic, and there are plenty of jokes at the expense of unworlly intellectuals. Poor Waldemar, who lives for know-

Getting ready for change

By Jayne Pilling

ROBERT WATSON:
Rumours of Fulfillment
202pp. Heinemann. £6.95.
434 84201 X

Rumours of Fulfillment rather neatly combines in its title both its setting - Wales around the time of the 1945-46 election - and its ostensible story-line, the growing-up of two sisters in a small Welsh village. Yet, just as the Welsh question informs the characters' lives but does not really intrude on the narrative, except as a metaphor, so the novel constantly enlarges on the theme of adolescence to achieve a resonance that takes it beyond close observation of teenagers' lives.

Robert Watson's understanding of what it is like to be a teenage girl is extraordinary in its depth, precision and detail. Rhianon, eighteen, is a girl about to leave home. She marks time before university in a dormitory, sexual encounters, then in sharing the young art teacher who seems to recognize her uniqueness.

ledge alone, who, on being saved from drowning, promptly remarks: "It isn't true; one's whole life does pass before one's eyes" and who almost wants to die so that he can find out what death is like, indeed comes across as an epitome of the species.

Yet the author does not fall into the trap, common in this kind of novel, of using intelligence and wit to denigrate intelligence and wit and to uphold the "natural" life. She knows that, however artificial happiness, order and rationality may be, the alternative, which is chaos, is only painful and unproductive. The final sentence of the novel, which describes the Lambs' flight home - "The higher they flew, the simpler and more beautiful the earth appeared" - is both ironic and sincere, and neatly sums up this humorous, tender and provocative book.

The almost schizophrenic adolescent capacity for passionate self-romanticism and deliberate, self-observing experiment with people and relationships is explored with sympathy and clearheadedness. Ruth, three years younger, puzzles Rhianon with her acceptance of life around her. She marries her first boyfriend and settles down, despite the economic instability of the area.

As the girls leave home, their parents break up. The teenage last-fling attempt at rejuvenation - is forced to confront the reality of a woman who refused to settle for what is, when that is no longer enough. It is in the handling of this family crisis that Watson's pervasive concerns emerge. The realistic mode of the family saga provides a narrative pleasure that is all the more acute for the way Watson reverses its general tendency to conclusiveness through the passing of time and generations. One realizes that what interests the writer is not adolescence in itself, but its highlighting of the choices people, all through their lives, make. Choices that are not as deliberate as they seem, but which in response to their capacity for change, Rhianon's affair with her teacher, develops beyond a manipulative schoolgirl

crush as her own needs and expectations change. Her father's feelings are deadened as - his present and future wrecked - the past realises him. These are the most powerful illustrations of the author's design. Yet nothing is forced, and the twists and turns of the story seem to disconcert the characters as much as they do the reader; a tribute to Watson's trenchant observation, vivid and naturalistic dialogue, and apparently artless plotting.

In his earlier novel *Events Beyond the Heartlands*, a young couple escape from London to a remote cottage for a new start after their divorce. But their lives alter in ways they did not and could not have imagined. In both novels, Wales, though vividly particularized, seems less a place than a state of mind. There is no nationalist rhetoric in the history and wavering potential of the country act as barely perceptible, yet quite potent images of stasis and change for the characters. The self as a new country, despite its familiar appearance and the imperiousness of personal history, is a metaphor Watson endows with remarkable freshness. He also pays his readers the ultimate compliment of allowing them to discover for themselves what has been discreetly signposted throughout.

That said, there is much that is good about this book. It is written throughout in an effortlessly readable, at times sloppily clichéd prose. The office where Sarah works is curiously constituted; I have never come across a woman's magazine on which all the senior editorial staff were male. But Burnley's descriptions of office routine are witty and observant and she has some tart and sensible things to say about the otioseness of a work ethic which prizes hours spent in the office above actual achievement.

One of the stories in her mosaic, the mother-in-law's, is truly resonant. The daughter of a Polish Jewish landlord who became destitute in the pre-war inflation, Adela was effectively bought with the contents of a florist's shop by a wealthy but frigid German whose sexual coldness was matched by the stinginess with which he bargained for her hand. In its combination of the exotic and the human her story seems almost too vivid here. It reads like a preliminary sketch for another, better, novel.

Authors of published poetry or fiction are invited to apply for Bursaries under the Southern Arts Literature Bursary Scheme. Further details may be obtained from Michael Lauchbury, Assistant Director, Southern Arts Association, 19 Southgate Street, Winchester.

In a more enlightened, better ordered society the reading of Dornford Yates's last novel *She Fell Among Thieves* in the *New Statesman*, wrote:

Sometimes, at great garden parties, literary luncheons, or in the quiet of an exclusive gunroom, a laugh rings out. The sad, formal faces for a moment relax and a smaller group is formed within the larger. They are admirers of Dornford Yates who have found out each other. We are badly organized, we know little about ourselves and next to nothing about our hero, but we appreciate fine writing when we come across it, and a wit that is ageless united to a courtesy that is extinct.

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In 1920 the Mercers visited Pau - "le Melton Mowbray de la France" - as it had been described to an earlier visitor. There was a large English colony; the climate was favourable; life inexpensive. They proved to be a Dornford Yates verb) the surrounding countryside, returned in 1922 and rented the Villa Maryland, where Mercer was to live for the next seventeen years.

Chronicles of the Pleydells continued to appear. *Jonah and Co.* takes them, following Mercer, to Pau, where Berry drops a pot of marmalade in the Place Royale and reveals for the first time his transverse inclinations. Two essays in the romantic novel vein, *Anthony Lynden* and its sequel *Valerie French*, were not altogether successful, but in 1927 he broke new, fruitful ground with the first adventure story, *Blind Corner*. It is narrated by the immensely strong, but not always quick-witted, Richard Chandos, and is set in Carinthia, where: "if you fought a duel with a couple of Lewis guns, nobody'd take the trouble to come and see what it was." Chandos is to be the hero of most of the succeeding adventure stories; Carinthia or the Pyrenees their setting.

By the 1930s Mercer had become something of a recluse, reputedly moody and ill-tempered. His marriage was on the rocks. Curiously, the book that has strong claims to be the best and funniest of the Berry stories, *Adèle and Co.*, was written at this time. In 1933 he and Bettina were divorced, and the following year he married Elizabeth Bowie, a twenty-eight-year-old Englishwoman. Life began to improve.

During the 1930s his work was at the height of its popularity. A new Dornford Yates appeared each year, to be enthusiastically reviewed and rapidly reprinted. "For speed of action, ingenuity of situation and breathless excitement, I do not believe Mr Yates has a rival to-day," wrote *Punch*; the *Nottingham Guardian* called *She Painted Her Face* "a tale of strife and cunning, wild adventure and sweet romance"; and *Gale Warning* the *Daily Mail*

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A. J. SMITHERS:
Dornford Yates:
A Biography
241pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £8.95.
0 340 27547 2

In July 1935 Cyril Connolly, reviewing Dornford Yates's latest novel *She Fell Among Thieves* in the *New Statesman*, wrote:

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The last of the Carinthians

By T. J. Binyon

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Dornford Yates:
A Biography
241pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £8.95.
0 340 27547 2

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In a more enlightened, better ordered society the reading of Dornford Yates's last novel *She Fell Among Thieves* in the *New Statesman*, wrote:

Sometimes, at great garden parties, literary luncheons, or in the quiet of an exclusive gunroom, a laugh rings out. The sad, formal faces for a moment relax and a smaller group is formed within the larger. They are admirers of Dornford Yates who have found out each other. We are badly organized, we know little about ourselves and next to nothing about our hero, but we appreciate fine writing when we come across it, and a wit that is ageless united to a courtesy that is extinct.

By the 1930s Mercer had become something of a recluse, reputedly moody and ill-tempered. His marriage was on the rocks. Curiously, the book that has strong claims to be the best and funniest of the Berry stories, *Adèle and Co.*, was written at this time. In 1933 he and Bettina were divorced, and the following year he married Elizabeth Bowie, a twenty-eight-year-old Englishwoman. Life began to improve.

During the 1930s his work was at the height of its popularity. A new Dornford Yates appeared each year, to be enthusiastically reviewed and rapidly reprinted. "For speed of action, ingenuity of situation and breathless excitement, I do not believe Mr Yates has a rival to-day," wrote *Punch*; the *Nottingham Guardian* called *She Painted Her Face* "a tale of strife and cunning, wild adventure and sweet romance"; and *Gale Warning* the *Daily Mail*

spent eighteen months there, became wretchedly ill and was invalided home with rheumatism. In London he met a dark, pretty American actress called Bettina Stokes Edwards, who had a small part in *Chu Chin Chow*. Smithers includes a charming picture of her, draped in the Stars and Stripes and little, if anything, else. They were married in October 1919 and a son, Richard, was born the following year.

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wrote "Most refreshing entertainment from first to last, with the spice of adventure and not a touch of the morbid."

Financially more than secure, and wishing to settle permanently in the Pyrenees, the Mercers began to prospect a site on which to build their dream house. It was eventually found: the slope of a mountain some twenty miles outside Pau. *The House That Berry Built* describes the build-

ing of Cockade - designed by Mercer - in detail, interweaving it with an ingenious detective story, A. J. Smithers gives us two photographs of the house: neither is very informative. It would have been good, too, to have had a ground plan, and a more definite indication of its location.

Cockade was completed in the summer of 1939. The Mercers spent only a year there. After the fall of France, in company with a stream of other refugees, they crossed the border into Spain. A few days later they went to Portugal; then to Rhodesia, where they spent the war years.

In 1945 they returned to France, but were apparently met with hostility, malice and dishonesty. Such, at

least, is the picture given by Elizabeth Mercer and by the semi-autobiographical *As Berry and I Were Saying*. Smithers tells us that Thérèse, Elizabeth's former maid, presents a very different account of the return to Cockade, but he teasingly neglects to inform us what it is.

Saddened, the Mercers returned to Rhodesia. More books were written; another house was designed and built. Mercer died in March 1960. At the time of his death all his books were still in print and he had sold - not including a large number of American sales - over two million copies of them.

Two stories of Mercer's life in Pau which appear in this book have been seized on with avidity. One alleges that Mercer was discovered physically chastising a servant who had committed some act of negligence; the other, that Mercer, believing that some Frenchman had been making love to his wife, had fallen on him "on the steps of the English Club, thrashed him with a crop and broken his arm, to repeated cries of 'Sale Jull'". It seems only fair to point out that both these stories apparently depend on the unsupported testimony of a single witness who is recalling orally incidents which took place some fifty years earlier. Both stories might easily be true; but it is all too often the case that the people's recollections of the famous or the notorious fact becomes overlaid with legend. Certainly Smithers should, if only in the service of historical accuracy, have pushed his investigation a little further here.

Because of the relative lack of evidence, the author finds it necessary to turn frequently to the works for guidance on Mercer's life. It is true that these are full of an unconscious symbolism, and that a Freudian critic could have a field-day with them. Why, for example, the obsessive link between captivity and water supply? Chandos and Mancel are trapped at the bottom of a well

in *Blind Corner*, as is Richard Exon in *She Painted Her Face*; in *Red in the Morning* Chandos and the Stoat (Mona Long) escape from the Château d'Arx down the main drain. However, it seems unwise to use the stories as primary sources for the biography.

On the books themselves Smithers is disappointing. His treatment is nowhere near as interesting or as perceptive as Richard Osborne's sympathetic but unblinkered appreciation in his *Clubland Heroes* - a book which, strangely, finds a mention here only on the dust-jacket.

Dornford Yates has been - and still is - the subject of more ignorant abuse than any other writer of the period - though John Buchan must run him a close second. Most critics who have attacked him have been rendered so indignant by his work that they have, quite understandably, refused to read a line of it. To try to convince them that Berry is amusing, or Chandos exciting, is impossible: they are so armoured by prejudice as to be amenable only to the argument of a twenty-five-pounder firing over open sights. Unfortunately Smithers's book can only reinforce these prejudices, and is unlikely to persuade the objective reader that Yates is an author to turn to for amusement. He makes such a heavy weather of explaining away some of Yates's more unpleasant traits - snobbery, love of violence, and anti-semitism, for example - that they bulk far larger than they did in actuality. He would have done better merely to point out that, in the end, Yates is no more offensive than most popular writers of the period, and that all must be censured if he is to be.

In his adventure stories Yates creates a world of fantasy with little or no relation to reality: Carinthia in the summer, with the hero lifting the Rolls out of the thicket where it has been berthed, to storm noiselessly after the villain: a pursuit that will end with a duel in the dark and a daring, impossible escape from captivity.

The Berry stories are much closer to real life; are indeed, in a way not satisfactorily treated by Smithers, extremely bound up with Yates's own life. Yet they too embody to some extent a world of fantasy created by the desire to perpetuate the ordered, settled life of Edwardian England before the First World War. Both Berry and Yates know this to be impossible; that they should strive to preserve what they consider to be the values of that age may be pathetic, but is reasonably harmless; at least they never attempt to impose their views by force on others.

the whole, I'd rather be in Philadelphia". It is interesting how many of the names appear on both sides of the insult counter. W. S. Gilbert, introduced to a sweating Beerboom Tree after an inadequate performance by the actor in a Gilbert piece, remarked "Your skin has been acting at any rate." And Tree, replying later to an aspiring playwright, wrote, "My Dear Sir, I have read your play. Oh, my dear Sir, Yours faithfully." "Edith is a bad loser," said Percy Wyndham Lewis of Edith Sitwell, "when worsted in an argument she throws Chamberlain's Rules to the winds. She once called me Percy." Hemingway, however, found Lewis's eyes to be those of an unsuccessful rapist. Lewis called Gertrude Stein's prose "a cold, black, sweet pudding", while Stein referred to Pound as "a village explainer, excellent if you were a village, but if you were not, not". An anonymous churl felt that "a day away from Tullulah Bankhead was like a month in the country", while Tullulah described herself disarmingly as "pure as driven slush". I found

Virginia Woolf on Eliot strangely revealing. "Pale, marmoreal Eliot, like a chapped office boy on a high stool, with a cold in his head." I suppose she fancied him. Eliot, of course, never insulted anyone.

How strange to qualify for Parnassus, like so many here, only by having been abused by someone. "A one-man slum", one Heywood Brown was dubbed. An article by Henry Brougham was allowed by Sydney Smith to be long, yet vigorous, like the penis of a jockey. "I was interested to learn the alleged sources of two now-ditched Don Quixotes: 'His rose-without-thorn' (Kitty Muggenidge on David Frost) and 'A legend in his own lunchtime' (Christopher Wordsworth on Clifford Makins). Accuracy and malice are the vital ingredients of a memorable invective. 'He looks like the guy in a science fiction movie who is the first to see the Creature' said David Frye of Gerald Ford. But the best laugh of all came from a non-insult from W. C. Fields: 'I always keep a supply of strigilani handy in case I see a snake, which I also keep handy.'

Qualifying for Parnassus

By Hugo Williams

NANCY McPHEE
The Second Book of Insults
132pp. Deutsch. £3.95.
0 233 97375 5

What scribbler wouldn't gladly exchange his way of life for that of the wit? Unfortunately, there are fewer places available in that school. As Oscar Wilde laid down, "Men turn to literature who have failed to make their mark in society." However, for those of us afflicted with chronic *esprit de Pascal*, here is a fine training manual from the Open University of Slander, Vituperation and Abuse.

It is organized into four sections: one-liners, literary put-downs, great curmudgeons (W. S. Lander, the Duke of Wellington, William Cobbett and Sydney Smith) and epigrams, few of which can have been carved in marble (W. C. Fields: "On

Problems in the pipeline

By Mark Abley

HUGH BRODY:
Maps and Dreams
Indians and the British Columbia
Frontier
297pp. Jill Norman and Hobhouse.
£7.95
0 906908 76 0

"We can't recognize aboriginal rights because no society can be built on historical 'might-have-beens'." The words are Pierre Trudeau's, but they give voice to a sentiment on which the economies of Brazil, Australia, the Soviet Union and many other nations as well as Canada are founded. Implicit in the denial of native rights is a belief that eventually the only choice facing aboriginal societies must be assimilation or death. Such a deterministic view of history imposes its own will on the future. It is that determinism which Hugh Brody's superb book *Maps and Dreams* sets out to undermine.

Its terms of reference are deceptively narrow: a study of the culture and economy of several small groups of Indians living in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, north-eastern British Columbia. Brody spent eighteen months in a Beaver Indian Community in 1978-9, helping to compile a land-use and occupancy study in preparation for the official hearings into the Alaska Pipeline project, whose effect could well be to violate irreparably the traditional cultures of the areas through which it extends. After a few weeks of reticence and unease about Brody's presence on their land, the people began to speak freely. Equally important, for many of the Indians lack fluency in English and Brody never mastered their language; they accepted his watchful participation in the rhythms and routines of daily life.

The result is an impressive act of witness, one of those rare books that, by its classification of "dry" facts, Brody is a nomadic author, roving through the territories of social science and literature and venturing occasionally into the domain of history; and he knows full well that his own presence among the Beaver affected the discoveries he made. His work had been commissioned by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, a fact which may lead some to regard the findings with a sceptical eye. Brody, however, claims that "research done as part of a political process can actually be conducive to the most reliable results." Previous studies of the Athapascan tribes of northern Canada (and, indeed, of many other non-industrial societies) have left great gaps in our understanding of their economic systems and hunting practices, for the Indians are masters of secrecy and have had an interest in maintaining the privacy of their way of life. They have recognized intuitively that knowledge is power. Only now, when their society is faced by permanent dislocation, have they been ready to disclose how it functions.

Central to the Beaver's survival as a people has been an adaptability so great that they have perpetuated a "traditional" process of life in spite of at least six generations of contact with white people. Whether fur-trading, farming, ranching, logging or mining, whites have seen the region as a glorious frontier; an empty space, a source of untold wealth. The Indians, while retreating from much of their ancestral territory, have made use of white technology (horses, traps, guns) and molded it to serve a yearly cycle of hunting that remains intact to this day. Even the government's provision, twenty years ago, of permanent housing on the reserves failed to destroy the patterns of seasonal movement.

The Beaver have not, of course, been unaffected by the blandishments of white society. Brody points out that the stereotyped picture of Canadian Indians as idle, violent drunkards has its basis in their unpredictable behaviour in towns and cities, not in their own community life. (One of the topics he leaves largely unexplored is the power of this image among the Indians themselves.) A group of hunters at work will display none of the fecklessness that the same men might show in

town; they constantly act with assurance, responsibility, and even reverence towards their prey. For hunting continues to provide the people with a livelihood of unsuspected prosperity, and to measure the success of the Beaver solely in the financial terms drawn up by a wage-earning society has been to overlook the basis of their survival. Their supposed poverty and deprivation lie partly in the disapproving eyes of their beholders. In short, Beaver culture is not a "historical 'might-have-been'" but a thriving entity.

The implications for government policy are, or should be, enormous. It is, however, one of the virtues of *Maps and Dreams* that Brody never over-interpret the scenes he chooses to describe. Shortly before the all-important hearing on the reserve to discuss the pipeline project, two hunters discover a bear-den with evidence of a sleeping animal inside. The community is not short of meat – yet the bear would be extremely useful, and such a fine chance for a kill might not occur again for weeks. "Joseph, Atsin, and Sam were adamant: we should go and get the bear right away . . . It was a perfect day for hunting. Who could possibly want to spend it listening to talk? What was there to say about the pipeline anyway?" In the event, two of the three decide to stay and attend the only meeting at which they have the chance to affect their future; but the third man goes after the bear. Is this mere innocence on his part, or is it a kind of stupidity? Is it calculated cynicism (for not meeting with Indians is likely to alter the course of a \$35,000,000 enterprise) or could it be considered wisdom? The man's action somehow exemplifies what the whole struggle is about, and Brody leaves us to draw our own conclusions.

The Beaver culture has endured not only because of its powers of secrecy and adaptation but because enough territory has remained wild in north-eastern British Columbia to support large populations of deer, moose, bear and other mammals. Indeed, as the region was probably one of the earliest centres of Indian settlement on the continent, animals may have been hunted there continuously for as long as 40,000 years. Because of this sacred attachment of the land, the most powerful hunters have been able to dream "the source of trails, the origin of game . . . the way to heaven". Or so the Indians claim, and at the pipeline hearing they unwrapped a dream map of their world for the edification of the officials. The whites were polite and uncomprehending. They had their own charts, their own faith, as "the ubiquitous hope for a continuing economic boom is encapsulated in belief in the limitless northern frontier." The region contains extensive deposits of coal, gas and oil, and work on the pipeline will mean a further opening-up of the wilderness. It is a clash, then, not only of land-use but of ideals. In a rare moment of rhetorical fury, Brody describes the rapacious dreams of developers as "the most established carcinoma of the North American imagination".

The duality indicated by the title is mirrored by the book's structure, in which "objective" analyses of the area, its population and its resources alternate with "subjective" descriptions of Brody's life in the Beaver community. The Indians, of course, would recognize no such distinctions between the factual and the impressionistic; their vocabulary does not discriminate between an error of judgment and a lie. Brody recognizes (wisely, I think) that both modes of expression are required to convey a comprehensive vision of Beaver life to our particular culture. It must be said, however, that the evocation of its religious, artistic and sexual behaviour is rather meagre. Perhaps it would have been richer if Brody had spent more time in the company of the women and less among the hunters. For example, the question of spiritual medicine – the Indian counterpart to what we might call faith-healing, and black magic – is raised in an early chapter and quickly dropped for good. The mystery lingers. Yet this may reflect a careful strategy on the part of the author not to appease our appetite for exotic novelty. In *Tristes Tropiques*, Lévi-Strauss observed of the

Brazilian Indians that "I can resign myself to understanding the fate which is destroying them; but I refuse to be the dupe of a kind of magic which is still more feeble than their own, and which brandishes before an eager public albums of coloured photographs . . . Brody is equally unwilling to flatter by means of a gaudy anecdote or image, and because of his vehement refusal to accept whatever destruction the future may bring, *Maps and Dreams* is free of fatalism or nostalgia. Those who experience Athapascan life at first-hand rarely indulge in laments for the "noble savage".

In the end this is a polemical book: Brody the sociologist and Brody the artist unite in an eloquent plea that the Beaver be allowed to retain their land with as little disturbance as possible. The plea extends, by implication, to include all our hunting fathers. These Indians have not given up, and *Maps and Dreams* suggests that their culture

will continue to flourish in north-eastern British Columbia so long as the dreams of white society allow. But the "so long as" is large and may be forlorn. Last year the Canadian press revealed the existence of a private government report which recommended that a recession agreement with native peoples in the Western Arctic be broken at once. The report proposed that an arbitrator be appointed purely as a tactic to "allow industry quick access to lands necessary for exploration and development projects". So much for the good faith of the government of Canada (which has, on the whole, treated aboriginal peoples with less savagery than have many nations); and Indians generally consider provincial administrations to be even more hostile. By a bitter irony the nationalist government of Quebec, which waxes lyrical about the oppression of French-Canadians, has proved viciously racist in its behaviour to the native people of the province.

Fortunately, Beaver Indians have become professionals at the art of survival. They have seen our future, and have decided not to join it. "He is saying as long as there is the sun that goes over, that he shall never stop hunting in this country and wherever he likes to do, as long as the sun is still there." They may continue to surprise us all.

Cabined, cribbed, confined

By Nicholas Shakespeare

LUDOVIC KENNEDY (Compiler)
A Book of Sea Journeys
396pp. Collins. £7.95.
0 00 216310 1

Sailing to Singapore in 1947, Vernon Bartlett was accused by a "revolving" woman, "I hear you are writing a book. Won't you please bring me into it? To get rid of her I promised I would. This paragraph shows that I keep my promises." Ludovic Kennedy is proud not to have listened to those passages of writing crying out for inclusion in his second anthology of travel writing. "Nothing is here because it ought to be; everything because I like it." He is well placed to make such a personal selection, for he served in the Navy and has written about the war at sea. The result has all the rhythm and variety of a voyage. Interweaving as it does the prose accounts of some hundred writers with poems and illustrations. It lacks only what made his *Book of Railway Journeys* so successful, the counterpoint between life inside the train and life outside.

On board ship, Ludovic Kennedy's travellers either share Belloc's regard for the sea as the matrix of creation or believe it best left to the fishes. For the latter, the vessel is an extension of their lives ashore. "It is a long, narrow city," writes Eugenio de Salazar, sailing to Hispaniola in 1573. "It has its streets, open spaces and dwellings. It is encircled by its walls." Each level of society

is represented, all emotions and activities enacted between the migrant quarters and holds ballasted with slaves, and the first-class cabins of Lady Brassey with her maids and shoe-trunks. There is even a manual, *Ocean Notes for Ladies*, which advises them to dress well because bodies washed ashore in good clothes receive more respect. And at his table, surrounded by writers, millionaires and aristocrats, sits the captain with jokes for every occasion. They are needed less for the Vanderbilts and Morgans, who so love this mode of travel that they book five years in advance, than for the majority who loathe it. "Whatever you do, whatever folly you commit," warns Anna Buchan, "never, never be tempted to take a sea voyage."

As the well-regulated eye of Sophie Taylor observes in 1851, "It is not easy to live like this without one's real character being known". The time-scale, different from that of a railway journey, allows the identity of Crippen's mistress, disguised as a boy, to be easily revealed; but the quirkiness of Maugham's intolerable know-all, Max Kelada, soon turns to dullness – while on board an oil tanker, Noel Mostert is aware of "the emptiness of real mutual interest that settles upon men who have heard each other out too often".

For most passengers under steam, life at sea is very much a below-decks affair. The ocean impinges only during bad weather when there is a lot of moaning at the bar; it is noticed, perhaps, during the final deck-tennis heats, or when there is a particularly fine sunset. Those in small boats, by contrast, enjoy a different relationship

with the sea and with their vessels. Flung like corks on the breaking water, they are at the mercy less of each other than of the elements. The most haunting passage in the book is Ann Davison's description of her husband's death, whereas what emerges from Shackleton's epic of survival for 1911 miles in a seven-metre boat, are qualities of leadership, courage and humanity. Stephen Crane finds fictional inspiration in "the subtle brotherhood of men that was established in such conditions, while Douglas Robertson, rescued by a Japanese crew after thirty-seven days, learns to forgive their countrymen for the atrocities he suffered in the war. For such people, in Longfellow's words, the dim, dark sea "divides and yet unites mankind".

In many ways, Ludovic Kennedy has fallen foul of his own criteria for selection, in that his choices are too arbitrary and selective. He has been tempted to make more divisions that exist between his types of seafarer. The nature of their travels in Part One, "Travellers at Large", is hardly different from Part Two's "A Miscellany of Voyages". Many are too long, and what is gained by the discovery of such writers as Sophie Taylor is lost in the omission of journeys from the ancient world. More irritating is the author's top-heavy inclusion of naval material. In the end, for all the joys of this anthology, one shares the frustration of those told by Admiral Halsey, when the battleship Missouri was used to receive the surrender of the Japanese, that "if ever a day demanded champagne, this was it". All he had on offer was coffee and doughnuts.

Space and Light are the Great Deceivers

Beyond the white houses rising from the hill
Must lie the sea, with its vain repetitions,
Its brackish breathing, its rattling, swishing, its moans;
It fears the lover's stroke, it lies in thrall
To the moon's abracadabra and the sun's command.

The children race the clouds, mock the wind's eye,
Their blood, their tears, draw them, draw them still
To the solemn battering, the melting smoky horizon.
Bladder and fluted shell, blue-spattering wood,
Glug of channels between the rocks, the ribbed sand.

From the white houses rising from the hill
Spire, turplish rocks, blue forests, singing roads
Stretch to far hills, white houses, other captives
Of the original tears dropped by the god.

The sea, the sea, the sea, the sea, the sea
Rages within and beyond the mind.

J. M. Cameron

Eating and being eaten

By Helen McNell

The Little Foxes
Victoria Palace Theatre

For Lillian Hellman, there are two kinds of people, those who "eat the earth" and those who "stand around and watch them do it". In *The Little Foxes*, the Hubbard family are the foxes who get all the grapes, and their wives, husbands, servants and employees are what they devour. As the passive audience to predatory capitalism, we too, it is implied, are culpable – and are equally likely to get eaten.

Written in 1939, in full awareness of the coming war with fascism, *The Little Foxes* establishes the origins of the capitalist disease in the nouveau-riches who want to be all or nothing, "a nigger or a millionaire". Born as neither, the Hubbards plot and gorge their way relentlessly towards the ever-receding goal of infinite wealth. Hellman situates her melodrama among the exploiters and limits overt criticism to some rather too concise analyses by the Hubbard's black cook; the final version of *The Little Foxes* was achieved after a lot of excision of what Hellman's friend Dashiell Hammett brutally termed "blackmoor chit-chat". As the Hubbards swarm through the parlour, descend upon the laden dining-room table and spend their unearned future gains, we sense the inner history that has bound them in competitive greed but we're not told everything; much of the greatness of *The Little Foxes* lies in its depiction of the visible effect of hidden cause.

By setting *The Little Foxes* in 1900 with the Hubbard siblings in early middle age, Hellman gives us American capitalism in its expansive phase, bursting with the unimpaired energy that even John Dos Passos slightly sentimentalized in *The Forty-second Parallel*. Hellman's special fascination was with mechanisms of power and passivity and, as a result, *The Little Foxes* is probably the only American play which shows convincingly how public ruin is brought about by private greed; and conversely how the terms of family romance are dictated by the mechanisms of capital. Most melodramas

stop when the account book opens, but Hellman shows with perfect ease how factories are financed, how Regina's husband's shares in the Union Pacific railway play a pivotal role in the family's scheme, and how racism is used by the wise southern factory owner as a device to control labour. Moving from public to private, Hellman lets drop that Regina's father left all his money to her brothers; she has lost the ability to enjoy sex except as lure; and her allure in turn only serves her need for still more money and security, which she will extract from the workers whose existence she ignores.

Much recent writing about the interplay of private and public has had to move from self and the obsessions of the self out to manifestations of the world in the semi-public spheres of family and work. This path is being taken only slowly and uncertainly by the current generation of American feminist novelists and poets. Hellman, however, has had to reckon with the opposite dynamic. Her work has had to press itself deliberately towards the private; her most recent writing being her most personal.

In melodrama, evil usually gets its comeuppance in the third act. *The Little Foxes* takes on a familiar look when Horace, Regina's husband, discovers that the slimy Hubbard nephew has stolen his stocks from his safe-deposit box and that there is a plan to marry his darling daughter to the very same cad. But in Hellman's analytic melodrama, it is the vicious who inherit the earth and Regina triumphs. She kills her husband and vanquishes her brothers. Her upright daughter Alexandra rejects her as the final curtain falls, but not before Regina has recognized her own vital rage in her offspring. "Well, you have spirit, after all. I used to think you were all sugar water."

Regina has a life force which finds its expression in exploitation of others. Like many Southern Belles she is a frustrated capitalist. She is a brilliant portrait of female energy distorted by society into monstrosities. We experience her in full malevolent flood, but in the great gallery of modern bitches she stands out as a monster perfectly adapted to her environment. In production, she is portrayed by



Three studies of hands by Carl van Loo to be auctioned by Christie's on March 23.

Elizabeth Taylor, who through an unhappy combination of physical constraint, limited acting range, and (perhaps) over-explicit direction, expresses herself only through sarcastic whines and hieroglyphic hand-gestures. After the initial shock of seeing a once – and perhaps still – beautiful woman turned into a barnacle-encrusted hourglass the visual impression takes on a metaphorical meaning. Regina has been compressed and distorted into monstrosities, and her provocativeness signifies aggression, not availability.

This production is about Elizabeth Taylor eating *The Little Foxes* and about the audience sitting back and watching her do it. The London run, sold out before it opened, has just been extended "to satisfy demand". The demand is to see a major film star performing in the solid flesh, subjecting herself to the tender mercies of crush bar and powder room critique. But Taylor doesn't quite make a fool of herself because she knows and responds to the fans' demands. Corseted, hideously bewigged, painted, pressed and embossed into something far beyond the merely human, Miss Taylor seems about as vulnerable as a marble egg. Let us forget, she acts Regina as a verbal and physical pastiche of several film roles, most notably the strident, smouldering Maggie of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

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Unreal twins

By Richard Combs

Impostors
ICA Cinema

In the history of cinema, Hollywood, as a mode of production and an approach to life, has been recreated many times in many places. Reputedly, one of the last places to look for it now is in the suburb of Los Angeles that bears the name. But even more unlikely is that it should be flourishing, on shoestring resources, in the work of a New York independent director, Mark Rappaport. This Hollywood-in-exile is a world of colourful discrepancies, in which both decadent extravagance and a penny-pinching budget are casually flaunted. Rappaport uses not just painted backdrops but slides and photographs to suggest the kind of decor one expects in a melodrama. Part of the fun of his films is responding to the suggestion while recognizing how inadequate it is as an illusion. The spectator can never resolve the contradiction between the resources Rappaport is drawing on and the effects he is displaying.

In *The Sicilian Route* (1978), this emotional-to-ing-and-fro-ing was itself the subject, as the spectator was sug-

ged between the ever-multiplying complications of desire and the desire to distance of Rappaport's style. But *Impostors* also includes something which can only be called a suggestion of a plot. This revolves round a pair of magicians, posing as twins, who are trying to locate a mythical Egyptian treasure. To this end, they have already murdered many, including a pair of real magicians, seen in some home movie footage in front of the Eiffel Tower (this "French" material having been specially shot for *Impostors*, which in the economics of Rappaport's filmmaking seems the greatest extravagance of all). The phoney twins hope that their latest assistant, Tina (Ellen McEliduff), who has some family connection with Egyptology, will be the next link in their search. She, meanwhile, is being courted by a young admirer, Peter (Peter Evans) who memorizes the dialogue of Hollywood weepies in order to repeat it to the interchangeable objects of his affections.

Peter's persona, one part romantic fervour to one part mournful alienation, might be the key to the movie's intent: to see how the heart-wringing certainties of yesterday become modernist ennui. The result is somewhat camp, and deliciously unembarrassed about wearing its symbolism on its sleeve. Note the echoing of red in the flowers Peter

brings to Tina, in her scarf (later a significant item in the undoing of the desire to distance of Rappaport's style). But *Impostors* also includes something which can only be called a suggestion of a plot. This revolves round a pair of magicians, posing as twins, who are trying to locate a mythical Egyptian treasure. To this end, they have already murdered many, including a pair of real magicians, seen in some home movie footage in front of the Eiffel Tower (this "French" material having been specially shot for *Impostors*, which in the economics of Rappaport's filmmaking seems the greatest extravagance of all). The phoney twins hope that their latest assistant, Tina (Ellen McEliduff), who has some family connection with Egyptology, will be the next link in their search. She, meanwhile, is being courted by a young admirer, Peter (Peter Evans) who memorizes the dialogue of Hollywood weepies in order to repeat it to the interchangeable objects of his affections.

They run circles round everybody's romantic obsessions, playing (in Rappaport's words) parts as various as the Three Stooges, Peter Lorre and the Marx Brothers. They are anti-arch-fiends whose Egyptian treasure quest involves much rummaging in genealogies on the part of Mikey (Michael Burg) and gleeful mayhem from Chuckie (Charles Ludlam). In a way, they are outsiders to the hermetic aesthetics and characterization one usually expects from Rappaport; one usually expects some eyebrows among his admirers. But there is something wickedly liberating about their squally, quabbling presence. Nabokov would have appreciated the conceit of this put-on twosome who have gobbled up a real pair of twins and seem similarly to be consuming the film's story-line as they pursue their own idiotic parallel version.

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BODLEY HEAD

commentary

Public-school players

By Harold Hobson

Another Country
Queens's Theatre

Julian Mitchell's *Another Country* is a school play not for children unless accompanied by well-informed, consenting adults. It is not in the least like *The Fifth Form at St Dominic's*, *Eric*, or *Little by Little*, or even *Decline and Fall*. What nameless sin enters into Dean Farrar's *Eric* I shall never know, because my parents refused to allow the book into the house. Few fathers or mothers today, however, will object to *Another Country*, even though it deals with the love which dare not speak its name. For it is set among the Right People (the shadows of Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, John Cornford and Cyril Connolly hang over it). By telling us that our betters are worse than we are (bullies, bribe-takers and weaklings) it appeals to the snobbery and self-righteousness which is innate in all of us.

It is, happily, much more than this. In fact, it is a very good play, improved almost out of recognition after its transfer from Greenwich. In the few weeks that have passed since then the director, Stuart Burge, and the author, have done work on it that is as impressive as it is unobtrusive. The company now speaks with voices that would have been acceptable in the great public school in which the action takes place in the early 1930s. The character of Tommy Judd (Kenneth Branagh), the harassed devotee of

Karl Marx, has been enlarged and humanized. We now realize more vividly his capacity to appreciate a straight drive as well as statistics of the Manchester poor, and his gentle kindness to a homesick fag. Very properly, Branagh now takes an equal place with the deviant hero, Guy Bennett, Rupert Everett repeats his portrayal of this character—sloppily dressed, wildly passionate, quick-witted—which was so highly praised at Greenwich. Finally, Mitchell, by ending his play upon a question mark instead of a bald and hurried assertion, balances a hitherto unassimilated scene with an elegant aesthete in the second act by setting against it a conclusion that stirs the imagination instead of merely informing it.

The argument of *Another Country* is that the old public schools, by their restrictions on homosexuality, taught their members a technique of concealment, an ability to look like one thing while really being another, that paved the way towards their becoming spies. In the play Bennett has several dangerous moments, and when he is finally and irrevocably caught, Everett's great piercing cry, "I shall never be able to love a woman" rang with a terrified anguish through the theatre. But that is the hysteria, and the horror have gone from the words. Everett speaks them as a mere statement of fact, and as a *coup de théâtre* something is lost here. But more is gained. The decision to become a spy is no longer suddenly taken. In fact, it may be taken; or it may be not.

This is how the vital rectification of the balance of the play is achieved. We



Ruskin's pencil, ink and wash study of a dragon from the exhibition reviewed by Grevel Lindop on the facing page.

are now, in essence, presented with two possible futures for Guy, instead of one, as at Greenwich. At Greenwich the scene of the visiting aesthete lecturer (most elegantly and insidiously played by David William) was very striking, but its point was not at all clear. But at the Queen's (where it is also played by Mr William) it becomes, in its Paterian style and Swinburnian passion suavely subdued, a portrait of what Guy himself might decline into in the future. Against this possible future an alternative is presented at the very end. Guy, disgraced, and with nothing before him but a life spent in pretending to be what he is not, is talking desultorily with Judd,

when it occurs to him to wonder why Judd is a Communist. He suddenly realizes that the answer lies in emotion, not reason. "You are not a Communist because you read Marx. You read Marx because you are a Communist". He picks up *Kapital*, goes to the opposite side of the room, and sits down to read. After a while he raises his eyes, and looks across the room at Judd. On that last, long, wondering look, in which an idea is beginning to form, the curtain falls, and we do not know whether Guy will become a Burgess or a devoted admirer of pretty boys and the Mona Lisa. But though we do not know, we are passionately concerned.

he himself at one point plays on a honky-tonk piano. *Eight Songs* places instrumentalists in perspex cages to represent the birds that the historical George III tried to teach to sing; at the climax the king seizes the violinist's instrument and snaps it. His words are part authentic and part the clever enhancement of Randolph Stow. He should be able to draw the audience into a uniquely compelling interplay of verbal and musical images.

Unfortunately the mad king at the Round House, Michael Rippon, did no such thing. His dilution and trivializing of the rampancy complex *voice* (the piece was partly an experiment in the production of chords by the voice) together with a staging of scarcely credible ineptitude made

this performance a major disappointment. The role calls for "virtuoso acting ability" and Rippon's is nil. His gesticulation was beside the point; he was funny only at the wrong moments disastrously when breaking the fiddle; he was a pantomime character with a show of funny voices. The staging put all the cages at the rear of the wide arena, leaving most of the space empty and obscuring the essential action. The accompaniments were played without conviction; the bass-drummer at the end of the howling march with a smirk.

I am glad to say that *Vesali* came across with considerable impact. Mark Wraith's realization of Ian Spink's choreography had force and commitment even if it lacked the

garish violence of previous interpreters. The approach was lyrical, a trifle whimsical; sometimes (in the *Flaetation*) disturbingly redolent of the director at other times camp, erotic and cool to surprisingly good effect. The stations of the Cross/Vesali figures were only fleetingly suggested; but Mr Wraith can at least play the piano. Alexander Baillie's cello playing was searing and brilliant. The ensemble, under John Carewe, failed only in the operation of a tape-recorder in the St Veronica scene. After the tension of this first half it was almost a relief that *Eight Songs* fell flat.

The Contemporary Music Network will be on tour in Leicester, Sheffield and Leeds on March 20, 21 and 22.

The curse of the Atlantic Triangle

By Chinweizu

Trinity
Riverside Studios

In *Man and Soul*, part one of Edgar White's trilogy *Trinity*, performed by the Black Theatre Co-operative, a Moslem middle-class student from Nigeria (his skull cap, suit and tie are the uniform of his strict puritan upbringing) finds himself in a London police cell together with an unemployed West Indian Rastafarian, welder (his buttoned red shirt and tight trousers are the uniform of his flamboyant hedonism). Their efforts to get to know each other across a 400-year gulf of cultural and historical separation produces a show of sparks in which are displayed fundamentally different values and outlooks on honour, love, drugs, survival, poverty, music, sex and just about everything else in life.

In *The Case of Dr. Kohn*, a sergeant who has seized power in an unnamed African country inter-

gates a deposed minister on the interlinked corrupt practices of members of his family and his colleagues in public office. Condemned to be shot, the ex-minister grovels for his life, attempts to hang himself, then recovers on the spiritual and material state of his country. By the end of the confrontation, it is clear that the zeal of the reformist sergeant will not be enough to cure the ills of his nation. This clash of zeal and resignation is carried over into *That Generation* in which a West Indian middle-class wife joins her husband who has sold his prosperous business and exiled himself to a shabby room in Shepherd's Bush and a job with London Transport. Exasperated by her husband's incomprehensible behaviour, she asks: "Is this what you or his self-edited convincingly illustrate the spiritual rot among the elites of former colonies.

As an exploration of the consequences of the slave, colonial and post-colonial eras for West Africans and West Indians, both in their own countries and in Britain in the 1980s,

The methods of a modeller

By Nicholas Penny

Michael Rysbrack
City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery

Michael Rysbrack, the eighteenth-century sculptor, deserves to be honoured, and above all in Bristol where his bronze William III, the finest equestrian statue in Britain, may be seen. This selection of some of his best work (much of it from the West Country), on show until May 1, has a local emphasis but is of national importance. "Gusto grande" — the grace, dignity and authority with which Raphael endowed all those who debate in the Stanza della Segnatura — eloquently advocated by Jonathan Richardson and Joshua Reynolds, and often attempted in vain by English painters, has been frequently achieved by Rysbrack; nowhere more notably than in a terracotta model of a reclining philosopher reading, which has been cleaned for this exhibition. A fascinating X-ray published in the catalogue (204pp, obtainable at the City of Bristol Museum at £4 until May 1; thereafter £8, 0 900199 16 4) reveals how the figure was first modelled in the nude and then clad with the more than ample drapery, the elegant fluency of which does not conceal the articulation of the body or diminish the sense of intellectual power which pervades the pose.

Significantly, it is not clear whether this terracotta represents an ideal figure or a portrait, for in many of his bust portraits and most of his tomb effigies (which commonly recline in this manner) Rysbrack felt free to "disregard all local and temporary ornaments" and give his sitters antique attire and heroic airs. This figure as well as some of the beautiful drawings made for their tombs, and the reliefs (adapted from engravings of the antique) which he devised to adorn their neo-Palladian halls, shows us how Rysbrack was more profoundly indebted to Rome than any English artist who actually went there. That is until then we recall that

Rysbrack was Flemish. We are reminded of this when we consider his small terracotta portrait of Rubens. Here we have not only drapery, as in the "philosopher", but costume and concentrated thought and an immobile pose are replaced by quick wit and nervous sensibility, curl, flutter and

Looking at these busts we may wonder whether Rysbrack was not in this period really more concerned with the rivalry of the French émigré Roubiliac than with that of Scheemakers. Roubiliac's portraits certainly had more vivacity of expression, more variety of presentation and virtuosity of handling.

museum acting as a custodian of local art in general, climbing ladders in churches, investigating the history of public monuments, and rescuing works from buildings about to be demolished. The catalogue illustrates every work on display and is prefaced by a valuable set of essays including two on Rysbrack's



A model for a reclining figure by Michael Rysbrack. From the exhibition reviewed here.

twist. Rysbrack made this portrait for himself in the period of his temporary fall from favour following the success (due more to patriotism and to publicity than to merit) of the statue of Shakespeare by his rival Scheemakers. Privately indulging his own patriotic sentiments, he also made companion portraits of Van Dyck and Duquesnoy; subsequently, someone had the idea of making an edition of casts of them — a crucially important episode in the economic history of art. Full length marble versions were never made, but busts were, and those of Van Dyck and Rubens exhibited here are of breathtaking brilliance.

This is not to say that Rysbrack's interpretations are not vivid, varied and beautifully carved. There is only one dull head in the exhibition — that of King Alfred, an ancient worthy whom it would not be easy to animate. Among the busts on display, are several marbles of high quality which had never previously been recorded and a superlative terracotta of Edward Colston, the Tory philanthropist whose tomb by Rysbrack and Gibbs in All Saints, Bristol has recently been discovered beneath numerous coats of paint.

The fact that this exhibition has been mounted is a remarkable instance of a

important relationship with his contemporary architects (by Terry Friedman and Malcolm Baker) and a lucid analysis of his methods as a modeller by Mary Greenacre. Every page of the essays and of the catalogue proper, written by Katharine Eustace who has also organized the exhibition, provide some archival discovery, documenting the work of a little known mason or the exact date of a commission, and her observations are distinguished by a combination of imaginative speculation and intelligent caution. It is an outstanding contribution to the history of English art.

Drawing what was there

By Grevel Lindop

John Ruskin: Drawings and Watercolours
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

Ruskin is being rediscovered, but the renewed interest in his work has yet to make the vital crossing from the academic world to the wider public. This exhibition (which runs until May 3) should play a useful part in the process, for the foundation of Ruskin's enterprise lay not in aesthetic or social theorizing but in looking and drawing — two processes, for Ruskin, virtually inseparable.

Three phases are apparent in the work displayed here. During the 1830s Ruskin was under the influence of popular picturesque artists such as Samuel Prout and David Roberts, whose work is shown alongside Ruskin's early efforts in the same style, all fussy broken lines and wry curves. The healthier influence of Turner, coupled with the tuition of J. D. Harding, who stressed a closely analytical, naturalistic approach, led Ruskin in the 1840s to an almost mystical belief in the importance of "drawing what was really there".

An extensive selection of his detailed studies of natural objects makes it clear that Ruskin found here at once an aesthetic discipline and a kind of perceptual laboratory. Whether drawing a cluster of rhododendron leaves, a quartz-veined rock, a dead bittern or a tussocky patch of grass complicated with bramble and birch-trunk, he submitted to the visual discipline of the

object with unrelenting thoroughness. One of the more striking exhibits is a watercolour of a single peacock feather. Significantly Ruskin chooses not a showy tail-feather but a small breast feather, and gives equally precise attention to the colour and curvature of the long blue-green barbs, and to the unkempt off-white fluff at the base of the quill.

The architectural studies often show a similar super-realism: the "Porch and Buttress of Abbeville Cathedral" shows the carved stonework and the tufts of weed growing in the cracks of the façade with the same sharpness. Once the subject is chosen, it seems, nothing is privileged, nothing excluded. The result is not an academic deadness but an extraordinary vitality, enhanced by a readiness to experiment with composition. Interestingly, Ruskin welcomed the advent of photography — he claimed to be the first to photograph the Matterhorn — and sometimes drew and painted from daguerotypes, producing wonderfully "cropped" images where buildings or natural features fill the frame, breaking all the rules of "picturesque" composition. As well as finished architectural studies the exhibition includes several sketchbooks with notes and drawings for *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice*.

After 1870 Ruskin's style becomes expansive and outline is often abandoned in favour of a concentration on patches of dense colour. There are cloud and sunset studies of almost fauve brilliance, and "Sunrise Over the Sea" is an intense abstract in radiant pinks, blues and greens.

Viewing the exhibition, one is

haunted by a word which seems to identify the quality Ruskin sought in the visual realm. The word is "inscape", coined by that ardent Ruskinian, Hopkins. The visions of the two men are strikingly similar, and though the Jesuit could not altogether have approved when Ruskin wrote "To see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion all in one", he must have recognized a common experience.

The catalogue of the exhibition, *The Drawings and Watercolours of John Ruskin* (22pp, Whitworth Art Gallery, £1), is available from the Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M15 6ER.

Fifty years on ...

The TLS of March 17, 1932 carried the following review of Eric Gill's *An Essay on Typography*.

Printing will be a craft, in the old and unselfish sense of the word, as long as its apprentices are universally bound by indenture for seven years. . . . The printer's craft, whose very jargon is centuries old, remains conservative for the best of reasons. Letters are themselves conventions. You do not change horses while crossing the stream, and since the fifteenth century, when the messengers of civilization went from foot to horseback, printing has never had time to alter what impatient readers agree to call legibility.

But the meaning of "craft" has broadened and been diffused in recent years, perhaps because of its archaism. Craft as handicraft, and prefaced by "art and . . ." sounds more familiar to the layman than "craft and mystery," which connotes not only technical skill but experience. Art is everybody's subject, because it affects the universal physical senses without much dependence on the intellect, and so today we have a considerable body of work on the

aesthetic of printing, and a trade system which does not possess one adequate and complete text-book which will teach a man to be a printer. To the critical material Mr Eric Gill has added a book written with the naivety which is the refreshment of art criticism — a simplicity which is disarming as long as it describes and comments, and only becomes annoying when it is carried into practice. "The title and the author's name must be given somewhere," says Mr Gill on page 114 of this volume, which is called *An Essay on Typography* on its title-page and "Printing and Piety" on its dust-jacket. "A book is primarily a thing to be read" is another truism which seems debatable only when the printer uses contractions like "sh'd" and "w'd", and makeshifts like "glor" to shorten a line. The purpose of the book is to illustrate and emphasize the withdrawal of industrialism and creative human industry into two walled camps. The cleavage indicated on the printed pages is rather the eternal one between amateur and professional standards, with their respective interests in Wit, and Flow.

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and Marilyn B. Young

This is a fascinating study of the two great revolutions of the twentieth century. The approach is both chronological and comparative: the authors concentrate on the distinguishing characteristics of the Russian and Chinese experiences during the same time period. £19.95 paperback £4.95

Oxford University Press

to the editor

Resistance Writers

Sir, — Richard Koffler (Letters, February 26) complains that my review of James D. Wilkinson's *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe* (January 15) displays my "lack of familiarity" with the subject. He first offers a gratuitous correction of the following sentence in my review, "It is hard to be impressed by the poetry of German émigrés who submitted mournfully to Hitler as if he were a force of nature. . . ." The correction? For the word "German" I should have substituted "inner". Now it is true that I received a proof of my review before it appeared, I would have changed the phrase as Koffler recommends. But Koffler must surely have been able to read the paragraph in which the offending term was embedded. The paragraph discusses exclusively the resistance within Germany. Its subject is stated only two sentences before the one "corrected" by Koffler, as follows: "To speak . . . of inner emigration, of silent resistance, is to acknowledge that political action is not always a viable option. . . ." Surely Koffler knew exactly what I was describing, and knew as well that others would.

Koffler concedes my obvious familiarity with the primary French sources, but he obviously does not know that I have done a great deal to promote the serious study of the German émigré phenomenon. More than ten years ago, in fact, Schocken Books published my book, *The Legacy of the German Refugee Intellectuals*, a collection of papers that, according to Martin Jay, George Steiner and other scholars, was critically important in opening up the subject to English-speaking scholars.

Koffler's objections to my treatment of the Italian Resistance are similarly lame. I argued that the important Italian Resistance writers are not as widely read or discussed in the English-speaking countries as their counterparts in France or Germany. Koffler disagrees, for what reason I cannot say. An examination of the American *Books in Print* indicates that relatively few works by Pavese and Vittorini are generally available here. The very important resistance novel by Vittorini to which James Wilkinson devotes much attention in his fine book, namely *Uomini e no*, has never been translated into English, just as I contended in my review.

Koffler also claims to be correcting me in stating that Vittorini's review, *Il Politecnico*, "could not have been launched to resist fascism" because "it was born and died during the immediate postwar period". But nothing in my review or in Mr. Wilkinson's book can possibly have suggested that the fascism to be resisted was any longer actively present in the person of Mussolini or his army. My review describes the debates promoted in Vittorini's journal as debates carried on "with no definite end in view", precisely because Mussolini had been removed and the anti-fascist opposition found itself without a clearly defined common enemy. Again, Koffler wilfully misreads what is perfectly clear.

Author, Author

Competition No. 62
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than April 9. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers to be opened, or failing that, the most nearly correct — in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries should be addressed to the Editor, Times Literary Supplement, PO Box 7, New Printing House Square, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ. The solution and results will appear on April 16.

1 Brahms, for all his grumbling and grizzling, had never guessed what it

Finally, Koffler disputes the fact — and it is a fact — that Togliatti's *Rinascita* criticized Vittorini's journal "for nurturing open debate". Why? Because "neither journal was published clandestinely". But, of course, clandestinity has nothing whatever to do with the case. *Il Politecnico* was criticized by *Rinascita* because Vittorini wished in his journal to debate priorities, while Togliatti's Communists wanted it to establish a coherent ideological position and to exclude anything that looked like backsliding aestheticism or, God forbid, uncertainty. My review compares the hostilities to the sectarian quarrels that split the American Left in the 1930s, and it is hard to imagine what so betrayed Koffler into the irrelevance of his "refutation".

ROBERT BOYERS,
Salmagundi, Skidmore College,
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

'Tess'

Sir, — Tess and Alec are not "fighting the fire", as your caption to Hubert Herkomer's illustration (March 5) for *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (not *D'Urbervilles*, as you have it) states. The incident illustrated appears in Chapter 50 of the novel, when Tess is joined by Alec while she digs in the family allotment-plot in Marlott, where she has returned on learning of her mother's illness. The flames in the picture come from heaps of burning garden refuse.

In the novel Tess sees Alec through the flames. Ignoring Hardy's description of Tess's dress, Herkomer has placed the two figures side by side to make the most of Alec's expression of lustful glee and Tess's fearful recoil: but these melodramatic terms scarcely match Hardy's intention. The flames, the pronged forks (not spades, as illustrated), the use of the word "fend", which precedes Alec's appearance, perhaps prompt the suggestion that Alec has returned to tempt Tess as Satan tempted Eve. But Alec tempts her with money, not love, and Tess is not afraid of him.

IAN MILLIGAN,
9 Chapel Place, Dollar, Clackmannanshire, Scotland.

E. E. Cummings

Sir, — John Bayley's interesting review (March 5) of two new E. E. Cummings publications is surprising in its unflattering about the content of the books themselves. He gives no indication of how the two-volume *Complete Poems* published by Granada compares with MacGibbon and Kee's 1968 edition — also called *Complete Poems*, also in two volumes, but starting from 1913 rather than 1910 and costing three guineas in those earlier times. There is also no assessment of Richard S. Kennedy's contribution to Cummings' biography compared with earlier, more discreet sources, although this can be presumed to be substantial. But not substantial enough for Professor Bayley who amazingly asserts: "The facts about Cummings' life . . . have no relation to the poet and his poetry."

PETER DICKINSON,
University of Keele, Keele, Staffordshire ST5 5BG.

Islamic Theology

Sir, — It is not an easy task to review a work of scholarship which was first published in 1910 and which has reigned since then as an acknowledged masterpiece. In reviewing (February 5) *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, the new English translation by Andras and Ruth Hamori of Goldziher's *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, F. W. Zimmermann chose — very naturally — to direct his critical weapons against the translation, the very brief introduction and the additional notes, intended to provide the reader with some minimal guidance to the subsequent development and discussions of the topics examined in the book. I read the review with some sadness. Mr. Zimmermann, I am informed, is a specialist in Islamic philosophy, and it might have been useful to have the benefit of his comments on some of the many points where Goldziher's book, and therefore the annotations, touch on philosophical issues. Instead, Mr. Zimmermann preferred to limit his discussion of the notes to a few general and subjective observations which — borrowing his own style of evaluation and exposition — one might describe as sometimes peevish, sometimes childish, and to concern himself primarily with the two or three pages of introduction in which I tried to situate the man and his book in the evolution of Islamic studies in Europe.

We are — it would seem — agreed that Goldziher was a great scholar, that *Vorlesungen* is a great book, and that both are part of a great academic tradition which needs to be defended, though we appear to differ on the source and nature of the attack and the proper manner of defence.

KEITH ANDREWS is Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the National Gallery of Scotland. His books include *Adam Elsheimer*, 1977.

DAVID ANFAM teaches the History of American Painting at the Courtauld Institute, London.

JOHN BARNARD is the editor of *John Keats: The Complete Poems*, 1973.

R. H. BARNES is the author of *Kedang: a Study of the Collective Thought of an Eastern Indonesian People*, 1974.

DAVID BINDMAN's *Hogarth* was published last year.

T. J. BIVON is a Fellow of Wadham College, Oxford.

A. R. BIRLEY's books include *Marcus Aurelius*, 1966, and *Septimius Severus*, 1971.

ANTHONY BLUNT's *Guide to Baroque Rome* will be published shortly. He is completing a monograph on the architectural oeuvre of Pietro da Cortona.

BRUCE BOUCHER is a lecturer in the History of Art at University College London.

NORMAN BRYSON is a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. His *Word and Image* was published earlier this year and has been awarded the CINO prize for Art History.

CHUNWEIZU is associate editor of the *African Literary Journal Okite*. He is co-author of *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature*, 1980.

PAUL DRIVER is writing a book on Peter Maxwell Davies.

P. P. DUNCAN-JONES is the author of *The Economy of the Roman Empire: Quantitative Studies*, reissued this year.

MARY EDMOND is a contributor to the *Burlington Magazine*. She is writing a book on Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver.

ECKART FÖRSTER is a lecturer in Philosophy at Balliol College, Oxford.

JOHN GAGE's edition of *The Collected Correspondence of J. M. W. Turner* appeared in 1980.

JOHN HALE is Professor of Italian at University College London.

PAUL HAMILTON is a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford.

ing a book on Nicholas Hilliard and Isaac Oliver.

THOMAS PUTTFARKEN is Reader in the History of Art at the University of Essex.

CRAIG RAINE's most recent collection of poems, *A Free Transliteration*, was published last year.

GRAHAM REYNOLDS's books include *A Concise History of Watercolour Painting*, 1972.

JOHN ROE is a lecturer in English at the University of York.

JOSEPH RYKWERT's books include *The First Moderns: the Architects of the Eighteenth Century*, 1980.

LORNA SAGE teaches English at the University of East Anglia.

RAMAN SELDEN is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Durham. His *English Verse Satire 1590-1765* was published in 1978.

HUGH SETON-WATSON is Professor of Russian History at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London. His books include *The "Stick Heart" of Modern Europe*, 1976.

NEIL TENNANT is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Stirling. His *Natural Logic* was published in 1978.

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D. C. WATT is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics.

ANDREW WRIGHT's *Anthony Trollope: Dream and Art* will be published later this year.

S. S. PRAVDA's books include *Caligula's Children: The Film as Tale of*

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BERNARD LEWIS,
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A child of dubious origin

By Stephen Gill

D. H. LAWRENCE:
The Lost Girl
Edited by John Worthen
426pp. Cambridge University Press.
£25 (paperback, £7.95).
0 521 22263 X

With *The Rainbow* banned and *Women in Love* proving difficult to write something "quite fit for Mudies". The novel, which he insisted was "quite amusing", "meant to be comic — but not satire", was *The Lost Girl* and it now appears for the first time in a text cleansed of the errors and alterations caused by the haste of its composition and the anxieties over its publication in 1921.

John Worthen's edition is something to be very grateful for, as is the Cambridge series of which it is a part. Most British readers will think the annotation too heavy and I, for one, am going to hate giving up my battered Penguins for texts of the novels printed with marginal line numbers, but the break must be made, for evidence has been accumulating that however loved the old texts may be, they are not to be trusted. Scholars such as Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Mark Schorer, Keith Cushman and Charles Ross have shown what complexities are concealed in the received texts of the novels and short stories and how significant were both Lawrence's habits of composition and continual revisions of manuscripts and proof, and his often long-range struggles with generally fair-minded but anxious publishers.

Worthen's introduction is an admirable account of what all this means in the case of, for Lawrence, a not unusually complex text. After *Sons and Lovers* Lawrence clearly felt uncertain about his direction. A novel "purely of the common people" was abandoned, as was an autobiographical project. As a first narrative, "Elsa Culverwell" (printed as an appendix in this volume), was also set aside but it did lead into a work which gripped him. "The Insurrection of Miss Houghton". When that story was well advanced, it too was abandoned as "too improper", in favour of an "absolutely impeccable" novel certain to find favour. Ironically the new story became "The Sisters" and eventually *The Rainbow* whose banning established Lawrence in the popular mind as a writer of dirty books.

Seven years later in Sicily Lawrence recovered the manuscript of "The Insurrection" and in a burst of composition completed *The Lost Girl*, not as a scissored-and-paste job on the earlier version but as a completely new work. But now, just when he was hoping for trouble-free publication and the speedy receipt of some cash, complications began. The manuscript went to Martin Secker, and the top copy typewritten to the United States, the carbon being retained for Lawrence's own use. Inevitably he revised it, but sent the revised copy not to Secker but to an agent, who thought he might be able to arrange serialization in a magazine. Some corrections were sent separately to Secker, who then passed his manuscript to the printers to speed up publication. The fully corrected carbon was not seen by Secker until the novel was in proof, and it was he, not Lawrence, who entered in corrections at that stage. Now Mrs Grundy intervenes. Lawrence was quite mistaken in thinking the novel "quite fit for Mudies". To satisfy the libraries, alterations had to be made after advance sheets had gone out, which produced such confusion at the printers and blunders that no less than four states of the first edition exist. Worthen concludes that the first state of the English first edition reflects the author's intentions most nearly, but that even that embodies decisions about the text taken outside Lawrence's control. For this edition, therefore, he has established the text from the manuscript and from the first state of the first edition where Lawrence's corrections to the now lost carbon copy are preserved, and at the last the name of the hero is spell, as he wanted it to be.

America but, although awarded the James Tait Black prize, it won little regard at home. It is difficult to see why. *The Westminster Gazette's* comment that *The Lost Girl* was "a child of dubious origin . . . as if Mr Lawrence's Muse had mated with Mr Arnold Bennett or with Mr Compton Mackenzie, or with both" was shrewd, but shrewder still was Virginia Woolf's "It is either a postscript or a prelude".

In 1912 Lawrence had promised, "I shall do my work for women, better than the suffrage" and had begun a novel whose heroine, Elsa Culverwell, clearly prefigures Ursula in her declaration "My mother made a failure of her life. I am making a success of mine." What was in "The Insurrection of Miss Houghton" cannot be known, but much of what one must assume was present is surely visible in the splendid opening chapters of *The Lost Girl*. Alvin Houghton is one of the legion of "odd women", buried in a provincial town and bounded on every side by the constraints of middle-class life. Lawrence writes with great command and depicts both the world of Manchester House and the wider social order which assumes that Alvin's sole task is to find a husband and counters her wish for independence by continual reminders of what is expected of someone of her sex and class.

Poor old Bert

By Patricia Craig

G. H. NEVILLE:
A Memoir of D. H. Lawrence: The Betrayal
Edited by Carl Baron.
208pp. Cambridge University Press.
£18.
0 521 24197 2

D. H. Lawrence's early life has been quite extensively documented, in his own works as well as in the recollections of friends. George Henry Neville was among the earliest to set out his impressions of the novelist. The gist of his *Memoir* is contained in a letter he wrote to the *London Mercury* (printed in March 1931). What really got him going, though, was the publication of John Middleton Murry's 1931 study of Lawrence, *Son of Woman*. It's in a mood of utter repudiation that he tackles his own project, contradicting almost every one of Murry's assertions about his subject's background. Neville's purpose is to draw attention to "a sweeter Lawrence than has yet been presented", an aim in which he is helped by the fact that his own association with the novelist lapsed after 1912. Lawrence before — the "threefold rages caused by his illness, Frieda, and the war" overlook him: this is the character Neville attempts to pin down.

There are various complications involved in the undertaking. Neville himself is one of Lawrence's characters: according to Jessie Chambers (another of the early group of Nottingham friends), "Gerald Crich [in *Women in Love*] is . . . a development of Leslie [Tempest] in *The White Peacock* and . . . the character of the latter was found in the first instance on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerdur Brangwyn; and Neville certainly preferred to find traces of himself in George Saxton, the young farmer in *The White Peacock* (who actually, if it's necessary to pursue the uncertain connections between life and art, bears a closer resemblance to Jessie Chambers's brother Alan). In the memoir, he on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerdur Brangwyn; and Neville certainly preferred to find traces of himself in George Saxton, the young farmer in *The White Peacock* (who actually, if it's necessary to pursue the uncertain connections between life and art, bears a closer resemblance to Jessie Chambers's brother Alan). In the memoir, he on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerdur Brangwyn; and Neville certainly preferred to find traces of himself in George Saxton, the young farmer in *The White Peacock* (who actually, if it's necessary to pursue the uncertain connections between life and art, bears a closer resemblance to Jessie Chambers's brother Alan). In the memoir, he on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerdur Brangwyn; and Neville certainly preferred to find traces of himself in George Saxton, the young farmer in *The White Peacock* (who actually, if it's necessary to pursue the uncertain connections between life and art, bears a closer resemblance to Jessie Chambers's brother Alan). In the memoir, he on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerdur Brangwyn; and Neville certainly preferred to find traces of himself in George Saxton, the young farmer in *The White Peacock* (who actually, if it's necessary to pursue the uncertain connections between life and art, bears a closer resemblance to Jessie Chambers's brother Alan). In the memoir, he on D.H.L.'s school-friend, G. H. Neville". Other commentators, of course, have seen in Gerald Crich a version of Middleton Murry, with Katherine Mansfield as Gerd

The Birds

I come back to the students' shabby cloakroom,
To listen to the birds. Their nest is out of sight;
Leaning from windows, in the cool, comes near
The high dusk crying. Sparrows? no, too sweet.
Starlings? I would not think so. Swallows, yes.
I watch the brown hill shrink. I hear
Sea in their voices, continents of heat.

Alison Brackenbury



Going Home

I East

These bamboo chairs are pale and bony,
a skeleton's embrace. Dozy
with sunshine I turn, seeing the history
of Europe in the room behind me - equipped for
battle: a chain-mail sock, a row
of broadswords hang in the wardrobe door.
And I wonder if your Buddha's hands surrender
or are held like a punished scholar,
ignorant of those pasts that now we share.

You come complaining of a fall, one
bruise orbiting into darkness, our own
planet shaded through umber from saffron
and we share the pain. I am sure
we have found a language without the immature
cacophony of new lovers, here in the body's true
language, the way my intellect rest
upon you, your ear a D along whose crest
my tongue traces the deepening S.

You push away my glasses and where
this modern town had been is now old Asia,
discreet through veined paper;
we would share it as goldfish immersed in
our unique atmosphere. When
I twist my pad its lines are rain
by Hokusai refreshing peasants at noon
while one hand rakes your hair into the Zen
conception of the furrowed, silent garden.

2 West

Your photographs will exploit
my childhood's English monochrome,
using rain
to gloss these sad cobbled alleys
into glistening champagne
poured from the cooling-tower's
grey cascade. Politely Oriental.

you say you like the seedy cabaret:
this chorus-line
of gaudies with its crude
Forties chic, catching crates
in a snood.
But the abandoned car only yawn
and lounge about

beside an old man's garden.
His samle cabbages
repeat themselves over and over while
he gags upon a word. Perhaps tonight
his teeth will smile,
as speech-bubbles rise,
empty in their aquarium but we

pass on. Leaving the Hala! butcher
laborately bandaged,
his brains asleep in their tray,
and his kidneys spread like speech-marks
enclosing nothing, driving us away,
South to where our cultures merge
somewhere among happier silences.

David Sweetman

Bank Holiday Gifts

1
On the green behind us
the fair has been set out like Christmas parcels

— all the heavy, adult playthings,
so predictable, so enticing.

We sip our last half-hour,
bitter as blood, and, catching

our breaths, take back
the fleshly gifts, still wrapped.

2
Children, with much practise
at being disappointed,
know the trick and turn it
on each other: "Give us your hand"

means a Chinese Burn
or, at best, an apple core.

3
At dusk a star-spoked wheel,
Immense and vertical,
will glitter over London
to joy-ride hearts into mouths;

the dodgems ape all kinds of lawlessness,
and oddity-flighted darts

win a sick goldfish, that,
perversely, decides to live.

Carol Rumens



Pastoral

Liners in the twilight
Dragged out by pilot-boats
Like great Christmas-trees of light;
Falmouth's white boom of bloom,
Shirt of wave-shock woven of light
Air and water and sounding,
A bell of rock and water;
And it is a feast on the sea,
The great wedding-cakes of light
Standing off in the plazas
Of harbour, the birds
Hunting like cats
In the syrupy light
And the fish hunted,

Those rigs spilling with light
Like pine-trees filled with lights
Filled with rich oily fish,
Crammed with finned baubles and light;
The gulls like burst pillows
In the spraying wake
The sailors swearing awake
Who sing in their sleep:
Salt-cracks and the bleeding iron;
The lean seaworn land
Lined with creamy fat
Of rich ocean of fish.
Like congealed light;
The cities with their searchlights
Tumbling down slowly,
All alight, beams wheeling
Over the horizon feathered
With cities boiling the waves;
Now the city of light
Roars from the East,
Planting his gifts
High in the sky, his
White orchards of rain, his
Fish like finned fields of silver wheat.

Peter Redgrove

After the secret revolution

By Tim Hilton

JOHN RUSSELL:
The Meanings of Modern Art
300pp. Thames and Hudson. £18.
0 500 233357

Among the many things that one can learn from this large, affable book is some information about its author. John Russell's acquaintance with modern art has been at first hand. He learnt about Klimt, for instance, and his portrayal of "a certain kind of European womanhood" in Vienna before the war; became acquainted with the masters of the School of Paris in "visits beyond number" to that city (it is good that his own book on Braque is in his bibliography); knew Henry Moore when he could barely keep himself in stone and wood; was persuaded of the importance of Russian revolutionary art in Moscow and Leningrad; realized, when reading *The Catcher in the Rye* on its day of publication in 1951, that there would have to be a new attitude to popular culture. (Russell would indeed become a champion of Pop Art); and finally left England to settle in America some seven or eight years ago.

It is to an American public that *The Meanings of Modern Art* is addressed. But its inspiration, we are told, is in a rather old-fashioned English source. John Russell has wished to write a book like Lytton Strachey's *Landmarks of French Literature*, Bertrand Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* and Maurice Baring's *An Outline of Russian Literature*. Such books are not randomly chosen. They belong to a special, well-remembered type: one read them before university entrance. They were assured presentations of humane learning that could be read with pleasure by tyro and specialist alike. Perhaps not everyone will agree that modern art naturally lends itself to a similar treatment. But

John Russell is an experienced commentator, and he has given us a book that relates the main movements of our century (mentioning hundreds of artists on the way, from Manet to Frank Stella and Nancy Graves) with much ease and a remarkable freedom from contention.

That may be because he is so clear that the battle of modern art has been for its acceptance. He feels that queues outside Van Gogh exhibitions are a cheerful sign that, at last, the painter has touched human hearts as he intended. This is plainly mistaken, and it is not the only way in which Van Gogh refuses to fall into Russell's scheme of things. *The Meanings of Modern Art* begins, for instance, with an account of a "secret revolution" undertaken by Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cézanne, three post-impressionists who inaugurated an unappreciated avant-garde culture. Russell has taken this phrase from a letter of Van Gogh's (who had just been reading Tolstoy) in which the artist had predicted that the nature of man might soon change, just as the old political order must surely fall. A number of aesthetic, social and political questions are therefore announced. But John Russell does not separate or discuss them: he is on to the next artist in his story. And it is usually not possible, in *The Meanings of Modern Art*, to find that any such problem is discussed as a "meaning" of any painting or sculpture.

Despite its title, this is not a philosophical book, and it is best to read it for the signs of Russell's own pleasure in art. Unlike too many critics, he gives himself to paintings that he likes. Whenever he talks of the way that, for instance, Degas "matched palest lilac against salmon pink" and set up a sharp apple green against the black of a glove" or describes Bonnard, Matisse, or even De Kooning, one feels the satisfaction of his appreciation. There are

many others about whom he writes eloquently (and a book of this scope must characterize many dozens of artists), but such painters call forth his most convincing prose. I suppose that this kind of luxuriant figure painting (new, not argumentative, not too tonal) was a staple of Russell's diet in the years when his taste was formed. It has given him an attraction to the palpable, to hedonism in domesticity, and a liking for modern painting that is done in an atmosphere of friendship. Not least, that painting has blessed him with an unaffected love of colour.

Had he given himself more fully to such pleasures this book might have been closer to Russell's undidactic heart. But he has chosen to write as an art historian, and includes a number of pages that will make other students of the modern period uneasy. He is a little too inclined, for instance, to write in terms of dramatic moments of discovery, "breakthroughs" and revelations, the rejection of the values of the Academy, or the art school, or the bourgeois. Art that preceded innovation is often wrongly assumed to be formulaic. Thus, "for more than four hundred years perspective had been the painter's automatic pilot" until Cézanne realized that "it would have to go". Such exaggerations (a downright untruth, in this case) may be hard to avoid when one is eager to tell the story of modern art in a rapid and vivid manner. But were he not intent on telling a story, Russell might not only have avoided such a statement but might have used recent art to illuminate former art, instead of telling us, as he so often does, that something "anticipates" or "foreshadows" art of later date. It would have been one way of writing as a critic.

A case in point is his bold declaration that "between 1890 and 1905 the emancipation of colour was completed". He is referring to Matisse's Fauvism. But of course we have

since known art that has greatly modified the view that all that could be "emancipated" in colour was accomplished in those years. Were there not ways in which colour field painting of the 1950s and 1960s (by reason of its size, abstraction and so on) did things with colour that were simply not available to the earlier movement?

Here is a matter which we might justifiably expect Russell to discuss in the role of critic as well as that of art historian. We might also expect him to be up to date. He knows that in the art schools (which he maligns - but they are where today's criticism really takes place) young painters argue that colour painting of this sort - Morris Louis's art stands for it - has indeed been "completed". They will say that, however great Louis's achievements, he was a "terminal" painter, one from whom there is little to be gained in practical nourishment. They will point to the paradox that all that one can take from this magnificent colourist is his drawing or layout, since his palette progressed from a recognizably personal one in the "Veils" to something like the absence of a palette in the "Unfurleds", his best paintings. They would say that today's ambitious colourist must look for inspiration to painters who used mixed or broken colours in a high key, probably in oil, not acrylic. It is odd that the models for such new painting might be in just those artists John Russell likes best. But his book does not feel contemporary. Now that new art needs to choose most decisively what old art it admires (its sources are "pluralistic"), to use the language of current criticism) Russell's appreciativeness seems, to say the least, unfocused.

The chapter divisions of *The Meanings of Modern Art* derive from its original part-publication by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Such a method of making and issuing an art

book can have great advantages: the paste-up is likely to come first. The design becomes more visual, and the colour plates have to be distributed in a lively and varied way. *The Meanings of Modern Art* has many beguiling spreads and sequences, especially in the sections that deal with the Blaue Reiter, Synthetic Cubism, and the early days of Abstract Expressionism. Sometimes the scale of the illustrations is deceptive, but we must regard this as inevitable. More drawings would have been welcome. If the sculpture is made a little dull, and Pop Art overemphasized, then that is the fault of the text as much as of the design, which in general is excellent. But the divisions of the initial publication have necessarily enforced self-enclosed essays on the author, and this must have led to some difficulties in the writing. Just as he is too abrupt in some parts of his narrative, John Russell rather slides through some periods and countries. The essay or chapter on "History as Nightmare" brings together Manich, Kirchner, Klimt and Beckmann. This is then contrasted with "Reality Reassembled" which describes early Cubism. "A World Remodelled" manages to associate the De Stijl artists, Mondrian, Chagall, Russian revolutionary art and Léger.

However, this method cannot manage the tricky period just before the First World War. When Russell has to trace the dispersal of Synthetic Cubism, the brief but significant appearance of Orphism, the rise of Futurism and Dada and the questioning, probing contributions to Parisian art from Germany and Eastern Europe he needs to resort to a stratagem. He attempts to bring this disparate and sometimes contradictory art together through the figure of Apollinaire, whose "cosmopolitan eye" we are invited to admire. It is of course true that Apollinaire knew artists from all these camps, and

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The Sunday Times

"Superb... a revelation... people... will be bowled over by his colossal genius, power and delicacy. These proofs have a truth and freshness I have never seen surpassed."

Lord Clark

"The new photographs of Michelangelo's frescoes are very beautiful and very impressive... their scale gives a sense of the grandeur and monumentality of the originals."

Henry Moore

"The lifesize details are unforgettable. Even those who think they know these frescoes well will discover a wealth of images here that brings the works to life as never before. No other publication does justice to Michelangelo's formidable achievement as yours does."

H. W. Janson

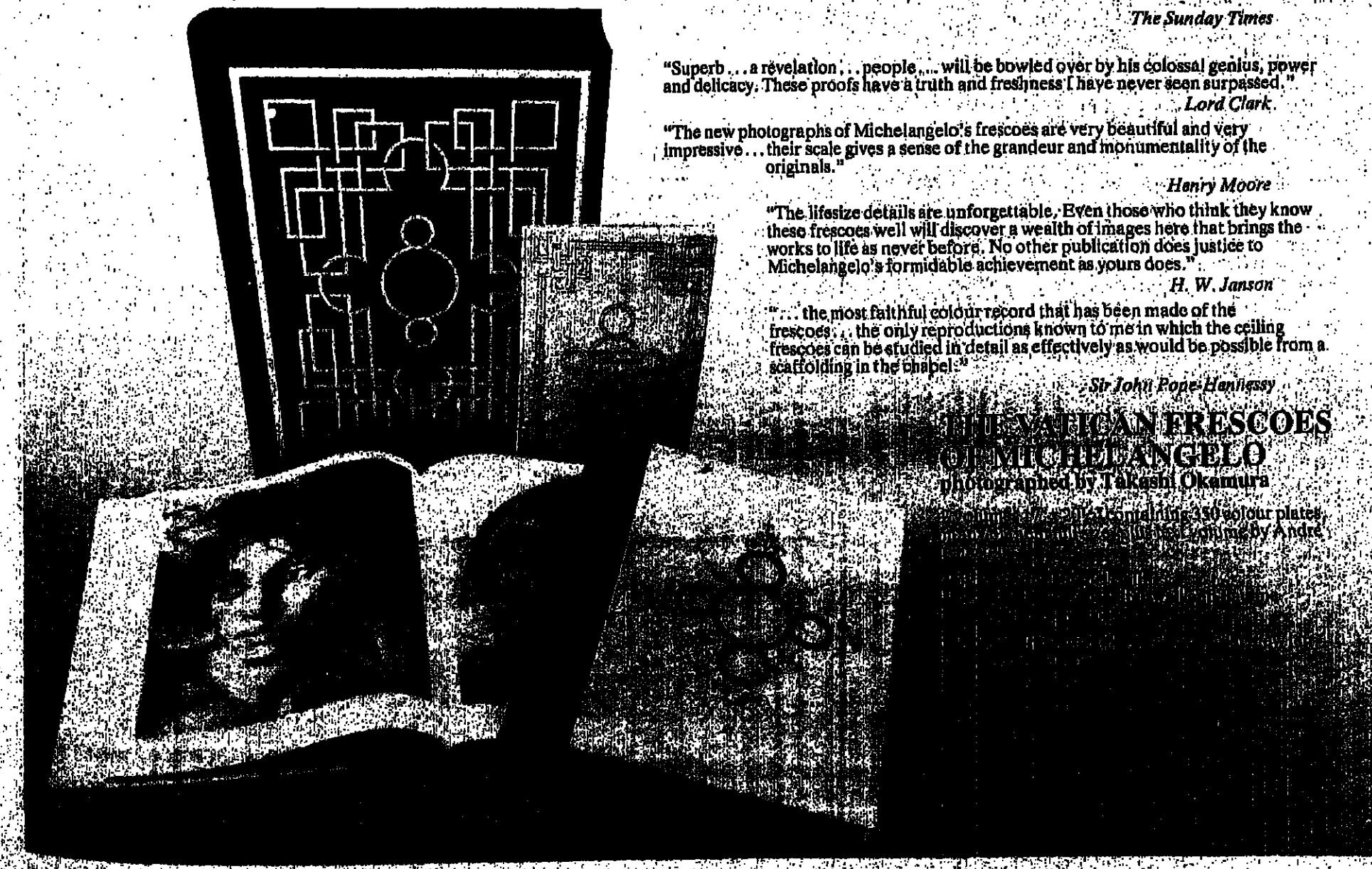
"... the most faithful colour record that has been made of the frescoes... the only reproductions known to me in which the ceiling frescoes can be studied in detail as effectively as would be possible from a scaffolding in the chapel."

Sir John Pope-Hennessy

THE VATICAN FRESCOES OF MICHELANGELO

photographed by Takashi Okamura

30 colour plates, 100 black and white plates, 100 pages, 10 x 10 inches, £10.00, £5.00 pb.



actively promoted many of them. But non-specialists should be told that neither then nor since have the poet's abilities as a critic been unchallenged. His personality brought him significant, sometimes piercing friendships with artists (Picasso called for "Guillaume" in his death-bed delirium) but those artists did not believe that he knew what they were doing. In Bruegel's terse words: "Il ne comprend rien à la peinture". Sixty years later, one sees no special reason to be grateful for his writing on art. It seems now (John Russell might not agree) that to be a useful art critic one needs to be a rather good art historian first. But *The Meanings of Modern Art* applauds the intuitive and unreflective Apollinaire simply for having known the right people at the right time.

Marcel Duchamp is introduced into Russell's book because Apollinaire knew him, but there is no reference to the way each reacted to the other. Since Apollinaire died in 1918 it is an open question as to how he might have responded to the Dada movement as a whole, and perhaps not an important one. But it is important to know how any modern writer responds to Dada. How does John Russell feel about it?

What is he to make - what are we to make - of the "Apollinaire Enamelled" of 1916-17, which in this book is accorded a full-page colour plate? It is one of Duchamp's "corrected readymades", originally a painted tin advertisement for Sapolin enamel. Or, indeed, what needs to be said about the original readymades, like the signed snow shovel and urinal Duchamp sent to the New York Society of Independent Artists in 1917? With the first work, art historians point to the connection with Apollinaire, seemingly commemorated, and might find something else to say about it (though in fact they never do); with the other readymades, they write quite confidently because there are more circumstances to relate. But how is criticism to deal with the Dada object? In short, are they any good?

John Russell is not the first critic to evade this critical question, but the elaboration of his evasion is pretty well new in histories of modern art. He is suggesting that Duchamp inaugurated an "alternative art" which by now has a tradition of its own, one perhaps just as valid as that of fine art.

Once he had opted out of the fine-art context Duchamp found

that ideas came to him as fast as he could note them down. He became, in fact, a kind of reception center for notions outlived by the conventions of modernist art. Among those which he put down on paper but never followed up are questions which half a century later were to preoccupy a whole generation of intelligent young people...

If this is a slightly tentative reference to the conceptual art of the 1960s and 1970s, Russell notes the less insistent that there is a fountainhead and masterpiece of "alternative art" in Duchamp's "large glass", the elaborate "The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even". The excellence of this work is taken for granted, and its interpreters are satisfied because they have shown that the glass belongs to "that select and daunting company of major works of art as to the understanding of which there can be no shortcut". But do we not know that there is no artistic advantage in obscurantism, and that a work of art is not proved to be successful merely by the elucidation of arcane themes? And do not the glass's thematics, when one enquires into them, turn out to be both seamy and chiding? It is interesting that Russell has no words for the way the glass looks, the way it falls down in contrast with the painting traditions, the "fine-art context" which it is supposed to mock.

John Russell is a cultivated man, and find it hard to believe that he really wants a "masterpiece" of our art that has deprived itself of touch and colour and that is made by mechanical drawing in a loose, almost random design (and is broken, to boot). Nor do I find any real sign that he has been refreshed by all the conceptual art, earth art, photography art and so on for which Duchamp provided precedents. Such activities do not have a large place in his book. But they are relevant to a discussion whose long final chapter is entitled "How Good is Modern Art?" I do not find that the question has been answered - how could it be? - and wish that Russell had paid more attention to distinctions of quality that have to be made within modern art. One thing that is unique to the art of our century is the wild variation of merit in works which, at any time, are understood to be important or not important. *The Meanings of Modern Art* would have been a more telling book if it had been written by a critic prepared to make value judgments.

European painters who were an important influence in the development of American art are scarcely mentioned, apart from Marcel Duchamp. Virtually nothing is said, for instance, about Josef Albers, whose *Homage to the Square* paintings are among the finest abstract paintings produced in the United States since the war, and who taught at Black Mountain College and later at Yale, many subsequently well-known American artists, even if like Rauschenberg, they reacted against his ideas. Yet Fritz Glamer gets undeservedly fulsome praise as "a painter who had managed to wrest from the dogma of De Stijl an elegant variation in which greys were incorporated with the primaries, producing a spatial ambiguity unknown to the earlier De Stijl exponents". So much for Mondrian.

Miss Ashton's lack of interest in the political pressures on art leads her to devote only a single line to McCarthyism. Nor does she consider Barbara Rose's thesis that during that period, critics like Clement Greenberg promoted formalist art with a quasi-political fervour and dialectical argument which were an inversion of their Marxist and political stances of the Thirties. Generally she eschews value judgments; but major and minor artists are discussed without critical distinctions. One of the few judgments she ventures (a sound one) is on Rauschenberg: "most of Rauschenberg's commentaries were infected with the urgency of the moment. Looking back to the work of the period, a viewer is frequently left with a strong impression of the topicality, and sometimes, like yesterday's news, the work fades. But it is not a judgment brandished with much confidence or conviction; generally the writing is limp: "Marcel Duchamp, an avuncular, iconoclastic spirit residing in the heart of Manhattan" or "John Cage's great charm and his spirited denial of all convention..."

In the later chapters, where Miss Ashton covers ground which she has not already chronicled better before, the narrative picks up. The last half of the book is a clear and well-organized account of the frantic and confusing activity of the Sixties and the Seventies. In her description of growing domination of galleries, magazines and curators, she adopts a more evaluative stance, ending on a cautionary account of recent corporate investment in and involvement with art, concluding that "the artist had better look to his situation with great critical care, for American art, with all its diversity, or, as commentators like to say, its pluralism, is on the threshold of crisis - not economic but moral."

Alien references

By David Anfam

ABRAHAM A. DAVIDSON:
Early American Modernist Painting
1910-1935
324pp. Harper and Row. £15.
0 06 430975

"If only America would realize that the art of Europe is finished - dead - and that America is the country of the art of the future, instead of trying to base everything she does on European traditions!" Marcel Duchamp's statement, made shortly after his arrival in New York in 1915, may have been ironic; for two years later he added: "The only works of art America has given are her plumbing and her bridges." But his remarks highlight some of the principal themes of Abraham David-

son's history of the first quarter-century of American modernist painting. It was a period during which a crisis of identity revitalized American art; figures like Man Ray, Steeler and Damuth responded directly to "the New Message" - so the Cubism of Marin, Weber or Walkowitz, also evoked a dynamism that suggested the quickened pace of city life.

Professor Davidson has produced an eclectic study of the whole epoch, encompassing not just the competing groups around Steiglitz and Arensberg, but also Synchronism, Precisionism and assorted abstractionists like Stuart Davis, Charles and Zorach whom he calls "Independents". His style is straightforward, though rarely inspired, gaining in clarity what it misses of complexity. He tends to produce potted histories of the significant names, but manages to set these against others hitherto far less

well known or discussed, such as the mediocre Hugh H. Breckenridge. Philadelphia's answer to Kandinsky, or that remarkable expatriate Parisian, Gerald Murphy. A chapter on vanguard modernist exhibitions makes dull yet necessary reading, but in the longer account of Precisionism the author conveys a fresh interest for his material and charts the attitudes that American painters assumed in the face of an abruptly industrialized society.

The difficult relationship with European art must be at the centre of any examination of this field. In America the Academy represented European values. For many of the artists discussed here the progress towards an authentic modernism came about through a dialogue with indigenous themes: Marin's pages to New York City, the Arensberg painters' comments on American mechanization, Joseph Stella's vision of Coney Island and Brooklyn.

Bridge. Their dilemma was the con-stant need to refer to the Old World, specifically Cubism, for styles which to embody their vision of the New. Much of O'Keefe's and Hartley's deeply original and sophisticated work could not have arisen from Europe, nor, probably, without its distant stimulus. (Given the fact that spatial organization of her work is difficult entirely to agree with Davidson that O'Keefe "never grasped the way in which Paul Gauguin's 'primitive' vision of the 1910-1935 is that, as a comprehensive introduction, it clearly shows where American painters did and did not succeed in transcending their European assimilations."

The High Chair

Victoria is still on the throne.
Your great-grandfather sinks into my chair.
His face is an anticlimax.
With its glister of brilliantine

Paul Muldoon

Signs of independence

By Paul Overy

DORE ASHTON:
American Art Since 1945
224pp. Thames and Hudson. £12.50.
0 500 23343 8

Good and interesting work was produced by American artists between the wars, but with a few exceptions it found little recognition outside the United States. During and after the Second World War, American artists not only had more confidence in the production of an American art independent of European practice, their work was also promoted in Europe and elsewhere by an increasingly powerful machinery of dissemination, promotion and publicity.

How this was done has been subjected to considerable analysis by a number of critics, mainly on this side of the Atlantic, during the last decade. Dore Ashton, a good and independent American critic, whose earlier *The Life and Times of the New York School* (1972) was a balanced and by no means uncritical account of the rise of American art from the 1920s to 1960, reflects very little of this in her new book, *American Art Since 1945*. The earlier chapters wearily repeat an often told story, with a lack of immediacy surprising in a critic who was around when it was happening. No doubt the tedium of having to recast old material into the form of a stylistic history, rather than a critical account, is the reason for the listlessness of the narrative. Miss Ashton adopts a blinkered approach to parallel or contrasting developments in Europe during the period. The American art world is viewed as self-contained and self-validating, which to a large extent it is in its *modus operandi*, but one would have expected a sensitive critic to have questioned this far more than she does.

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Learning from the ruins

By Bruce Boucher

ANDREA PALLADIO:
I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura
Edited by Licisco Magagnato and Paola Marini
582pp. Milan: Il Polifilo. L40,000.
8 87050 107 8

Edizioni Il Polifilo have been publishing handsome editions of Italian architecture treatises for well over a decade. The *Quattro Libri* of Andrea Palladio is the latest in the series. The editors, Licisco Magagnato and Paola Marini, have not only produced a balanced assessment of the *Quattro Libri*'s rôle within both Palladio's oeuvre and Renaissance architectural theory, they also have provided each page of text with a formidable apparatus of criticism which will make their annotated edition an extremely useful work of reference.

The *Quattro Libri* is unique among Renaissance texts on architectural theory. In it Palladio neither attempts to rewrite Vitruvius nor to place architecture in its broader social context, as Alberti did in the *De re aedificatoria*; it is not just a pattern-book of the orders, like Vignola's *Regola*, nor is it a modernized version of the architectural sketchbook, as in the case of Serlio's magnum opus. Instead, Palladio offers a systematic account of architecture, literally from the ground up, together with his own projects for houses, bridges, and his reconstructions of the best examples of Roman buildings. Although an incomplete work - at least two more books or sections were planned - the *Quattro Libri* exhibits Palladio's greatest qualities: his innovative approach to domestic architecture and his profound knowledge of antiquity.

Palladio's plans for his treatise began at least fifteen years before his publication in 1570. These were the years in which his architectural practice was rapidly expanding and his appreciation of ancient architecture was being sharpened by collaboration with Daniele Barbaro on the latter's translation of Vitruvius, first published in 1556. Palladio's decision to write about building was undoubtedly encouraged by the example of his early patrons, Barbaro, Giangiorgio Trissino, and Alvise Cornaro, all of whom had been engaged in similar architectural studies. From Trissino and Cornaro, Palladio received an awareness of the special problems of modern architecture while Barbaro encouraged a sceptical attitude towards Vitruvius' writings and his archaeological study of Roman architecture. As Magagnato rightly stresses, it was the example of Daniele Barbaro which exerted the greatest influence on Palladio's approach to architecture, an approach which sought to understand the principles of good building from the evidence of antiquity and from the actual practice of building, rather than from a priori theories.

The study of ancient ruins not only gave Palladio the means of understanding Vitruvius, but also provided him with an opportunity to select the best examples of ancient architecture, to illustrate his account of the orders in Book 1 and of temples in Book 4. In a complementary fashion, Palladio's systematic approach to domestic architecture led him to synthesize ancient and modern elements in his designs of palaces and villas.

Palladio's motives in publishing his designs seem fairly clear: he wanted to secure a copyright on his own inventions and to ensure that his painstaking reconstructions of ancient buildings obtained recognition. But his primary readership would have been builders and patrons rather than scholars. The *Quattro Libri* is written in the vernacular, eschews jargon and difficult terms, and the conversational tone probably explained the way in which Palladio's ideas were so widely disseminated and to work on the building site. It contains sufficient theory to satisfy those who were accustomed to Vitruvius and Alberti, but Palladio never allows this to interfere with the exposition of his own ideas. The plans he took over his text are clearly

seen in the logical integration of text and pictures (these are high quality woodcuts) which represented a great improvement on earlier illustrated treatises. In particular, the designs of Palladio's houses provide the closest thing to an explanation of his "system", for they demonstrate his hierarchical division of functions according to floors, the sequence of small, middling, and large rooms about a central axis, and the incorporation of classical porticoes and pediments as a principal feature of the facade. Moreover, they show how his repertoire of room and facade types could be extended to suit a variety of sites, a feature well illustrated through the juxtaposition of plates, as in the case of the Villa Pisani at Montebelluna and the Villa Cornaro at Piombino Dese.

Book 2 of the *Quattro Libri* constitutes what Howard Burns once called a retrospective exhibition of Palladio's work. Certainly, he did not hesitate to alter some of his early projects to bring them up to date, nor was Palladio averse to last-minute changes in his ideas. Of all aspects of the *Quattro Libri*, the reliability of the woodcuts has been most criticized in recent years, but Magagnato takes a sensible view of the controversy, steering a path between the absolute credulity of some students of Palladio's work and the total scepticism of others. His comments on the decoration of Palladio's buildings are also a valuable corrective to those who see the frescoes of Veronese and Zelotti or the stuccoes

of Vittoria and Ridolfi as somehow alien to the taste of Palladio himself. Magagnato's introduction gives an attentive reading to the plates and their figural decoration and identifies the writings which Palladio drew upon for his own text. He is able to show, for example, that Palladio read Alberti in the translation by Pietro Lauro rather than in the more celebrated version by Cosimo Bartoli. The notes also incorporate comparisons made by Luigi Jones in his copy of the *Quattro Libri* and references to the early draft of Palladio's manuscript which is preserved in the Museo Correr of Venice.

It may seem churlish to criticize an edition as richly laden with information as this, but one can only regret its presentation of Palladio's text. While it may have been felt that a facsimile of the 1570 edition was unnecessary, given the existence of the one published by Hoepli, any departures from Palladio's format deprive the reader of some of the author's original intentions - for instance in respect of contrasts he wished to make, especially in the plates of Book 2. Problems of space may also have prevented the editors from publishing an earlier draft of Book 2 of the Correr manuscript together with the final version so that readers could make their own comparisons; yet one must be grateful to Magagnato and Marini for this facilitation of four hundred years of Palladian scholarship. Their work amply maintains the high standards of earlier publications in the series.

Commissions for the Cavaliere

By Joseph Rykwert

CÉCIL GOULD:
Bernini in France
An Episode in Seventeenth-Century History
158pp. 16 plates. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £12.95.
0 297 77941 3

By the mid-1660s Gian Lorenzo Bernini was not just thought of as the great sculptor and architect we now remember, but as a great man in Europe. Fifty years earlier, polite Europe meant Giambattista Marino when they spoke of the *Cavaliere*, but by 1660 the same title denoted Bernini. The favourite artist of several popes, sculptor, architect, painter, playwright, stage producer, even impresario, Bernini dominated (or perhaps enchanted) European art to a degree which nobody would equal until Picasso. His energy and facility were prodigious. It is therefore not entirely surprising that the young Louis XIV - he was twenty-seven in the year 1665 - would hope to attract this vast genius to his service. The king and his minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, were concerned to provide the monarch with a suitable residence, how that the two cardinal dictators, Richelieu and Mazarin, had prepared an institutional structure of centralized power which required visible affirmation through a royal palace overpowering in size and in prestige.

Louis XIV had liked the castle at Vincennes, though his attention was increasingly attracted to one of his father's favourite resorts, the hunting-lodge outside the village of Versailles. In the meantime the conversion of the old royal castle of the Louvre - which was to the walls of Paris what the Tower was to those of London - into a Palace, a project begun by Henry II, continued. Outside the walls, Catherine de' Medici had started building another large palace, the Tuilleries, which, though incomplete, was connected to the Louvre by a long gallery beside the river. Gardens had been laid out, and were to be continued into the countryside by the Champs Elysées. By 1660, three sides of the new square had been built, but the main approach to the king's headquarters, facing the city, was not only unbuilt, its design was not yet final.

A fire in 1661 led to renewed activity in the Louvre. Colbert, who

became Surintendant des Bâtiments in 1664, began his long championship of the Louvre, as against the king's enthusiasm for Versailles; he did not care for the eastern facade designs by Louis Le Vau, and subjected them to the indignity of a criticism by public competition to which the principal Parisian architects contributed. Several of the designs were then sent to Rome, where Colbert was still not satisfied that he was getting the best. Through an associate of Cardinal Mazarin, the Abbé Elpidio Benedetti, a number of schemes were commissioned from Roman architects in what amounted to a closed competition.

From the outset the odds were heavily weighted in favour of Bernini; he obtained the commission, and was sent off to Paris in quasi-royal style. As a member of the papal household, he had to obtain permission from his master to go to France; both leave and leave-taking involved major diplomatic endeavours. The whole journey became a series of receptions, pageants and triumphs, like the progress of a royal prince. Settling out in the last week of April 1665, Bernini travelled mostly by litter, and arrived in Paris on June 2, where he was received by a royal coach and envoy. We know a great deal about the visit from the diary of the envoy, Paul Pradet, Sieur de Chambray; but there is also a complementary account from Bernini's most insidious enemy, Charles Perrault (remembered chiefly as the first collector of *verse-fairy-tales*). Perrault was at this time Colbert's premier commis, and was absolutely determined to obtain the commission for his brother Claude, a noted anatomist who endeavoured to edge his way into architecture by producing a translation of Vitruvius (which was regarded as a standard of clarity and scholarship for over a century).

The main problem about the episode is that neither the detailed actions of the different participants, nor their aims are always clear. The king and Colbert were men of uncertain taste, and the former believed that taste was a prerogative of his station, invested little time and energy in the arts. Colbert felt overshadowed in this; as in other matters, by Mazarin. And, as the Abbé de Choisy observed (correctly, I suspect), "plus il était ignorant, plus il affectait de paraître savant." Much of Colbert's harshness and harassment of Bernini makes sense in the light of that remark. Having brought him to Paris, the king and Colbert

played a very odd game with the aged Italian. Bernini made a bust of the king which is still in Versailles, and which involved many sittings, but the main business of the visit, the scheme for the Louvre, went through several transformations. Building was actually started, a foundation stone ceremonially laid - but it seems likely that even at this stage there was no real intention to build. A number of other commissions were dangled before Bernini, only to be whisked away. His opinion was constantly canvassed and on the whole ignored. An equestrian statue of the king was ordered and delivered many months later (the king hated it, and had it altered to a statue of a Roman hero which he confined to a Versailles backwater). Bernini left Paris on October 20 - had been there less than five months. By the beginning of December he was back in Rome.

The substantial anxiety that the king offered Bernini was paid very irregularly, and finally not at all. In the meantime, in Paris, Perrault had got his way. The project for the eastern facade which was executed carried Claude Perrault's name and continued to have a decisive influence on French architecture. The committee which "produced" it was made up of the painter Charles Le Brun, the architect Louis Le Vau and Claude Perrault. By then there was, if Charles Perrault is to be believed, a scheme similar to the final one conceived by Claude. There is no definite detailed evidence about this. On the other hand it is known from engravings that the architect-brother of Louis Le Vau, François, had produced a scheme that is remarkably like the finished building in several respects before Bernini arrived in Paris. Whatever the direct consequence to the building of the palace, Bernini's visit was what the king and Colbert needed. They had shown the world that the French crown wanted the best, and knew how to get it. They wanted work by him in Paris, and they wanted his assent and collaboration for the new French Academy in Rome. Both were aware that Rome was still the centre of European culture and that without the Academy French artists could never make their mark on the world stage.

Cecil Gould has told this fascinating, intricate story rather blipingly. The symbolism between the minister and the king, which is summed up in Colbert's heraldic device - a grass-snake warmed by the sun-king's equally heraldic sun, with the motto

"all my strength comes from him" - is missing altogether, as well as Colbert's terrifying coldness and his monomaniacal addiction: "tousjours plein du Roy, il ne songeoit qu'à l'éterniser dans la mémoire des hommes", as a contemporary said. The personality of Bernini - the brio, the brilliant conversation, the changes of mood, the ostentatious but genuine piety, the overweening pride and the desire to please - is also missing. Missing, too, is the whole backstage intrigue; perhaps Gould would have done well to look at Marc Soriano's account of the Perrault brothers.

Bernini in France will not engage the general reader, who will want to know why this episode is not merely an arcane byway of seventeenth-century art history, and the specialist may be irritated by the occasional mistranslation. The final irony of *Bernini in France* is Gould's use of the chapel at Versailles to show the detailed influence of Bernini on French artists without invoking what was plainly the king's and his artists' intention: namely, that the building should be seen as a proclamation of the sacred character of the French crown, and the antiquity of a national Gallican architecture - which also makes it a monument to the victory of Perrault over Bernini.

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The virtue of virtuosity

By Thomas Puttfarcken

DAVID SUMMERS:

Michelangelo and the Language of Art (266pp with 68 black-and-white illustrations. Guildford: Princeton University Press. £33.50 (paperback, £11.70). 0 691 03957 7

Whether the meaning of a work of art is circumscribed by its maker's intentions; or whether these intentions constitute only one of a potentially infinite range of possible meanings; or whether they are irrelevant altogether, being different in kind, quality, and medium from their realization in the work, has long been a matter of dispute. The relationship between an artist's intentions on the one hand and the criticism of his work on the other is always an oblique one, and as far as "living" art is concerned, it is surely safer for the critic to stick to what has been achieved in the work than to what the artist says he wanted to achieve.

In art historical matters, however, the situation is somewhat different. Art history is not just about criticism or aesthetic responses, it is, like all history, first of all a kind of reconstruction, an attempt to understand, as fully as possible, the whole complex situation within which particular works were produced and the whole range of circumstances which may have affected their production. In the context of these investigations the artist's mind—his ideas and intentions—must be considered highly important factors.

In *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, David Summers has set himself a titanic task. This is not primarily an attempt to assess Michelangelo's artistic achievements, but to reconstruct his thoughts and intentions. "The project must be described," Summers writes, "as an explanation of what Michelangelo must have thought in order to have said what we think we know him to have said." Many of his contemporaries thought Michelangelo somewhat larger than life, and his historical stature alone would seem to justify this project. He was, moreover, not just a painter, sculptor, and architect, but also an outstanding poet, and this would have sharpened his verbal and conceptual articulateness, particularly as Italian poetry since Dante had been highly self-reflective, making the art of writing poetry itself into an object of investigation and formulation.

Dealing with an individual artist—moreover, who was often deliberately obscure, enigmatic, and given to irony and sarcasm—Summers rightly does not attempt to force Michelangelo's mind into the lifeless and rigid schema of a coherent theory. Instead he proceeds by investigating the meaning of those words, notions and concepts which emerge from Michelangelo's own writings and from those of his close circle as having been of central importance for the artist. Although the book is arranged like a dictionary, listing under two general headings—"Painting" and "Sculpture"—thirty-five terms or problems, each of which is discussed in a separate chapter—the discussion develops progressively, with each chapter taking up and continuing the threads of the previous ones. The concepts and problems themselves reveal such a close mutual affinity that it would be impossible to summarize the book without doing

what its author has so carefully avoided—reducing it to an abstract and rigid theory.

The intentions Summers is talking about are on the whole not directly related to individual works and their meaning, but to the wider issue of Michelangelo's definition of his own art, of his position and status as an artist. This makes the book at times rather hard to read: it is predominantly speculative and only occasionally critical. Quite a few of the concepts explored in it, such as *furia*, *difficoltà*, and *terribilità*, seem to lend themselves easily to a critical application. And those few instances in which the author analyses particular works, as in the chapter on the unfinished "St Matthew," provide some of the most immediately attractive passages of the book.

Yet practical criticism, even in a reconstructed sixteenth-century version, is not Summers's main concern. What he tries to reconstruct are mental attitudes, the intellectual positions and convictions which seem to have guided and directed Michelangelo's artistic life. These are formulated in terms derived mainly from poetry and rhetoric and their respective classical traditions. For the modern observer they are sometimes difficult to relate to works of art, as they often imply moral and ethical judgments and assumptions which we would consider to be alien to the visual arts. Yet in the Renaissance much of the discussion about art centred less on the finished product than on the mind that created it.

The notion of artistic virtuosity, which in its modern use normally implies little more than extreme technical dexterity and fluent performance, has its origins in the notion of virtue. "The functional critical language of Renaissance art was a language that evaluated performance," Terms such as *facilità*, *difficoltà*, *maniera*, *grazia*, *aria*, *prestezza* and *terribilità* have to do not so much with properties of art objects as with conception and execution. "The main virtues of conception and performance are those of the creative mind: *ingegno*, fantasy, licence, imagination. For Michelangelo and his circle they were god-given, innate qualities of the great artist, to be discussed in terms of neo-platonic metaphysics and neo-aristotelian psychology; their manifestations often rich and extremely artificial designs—performances of virtuosity—were seen as demonstrations of the equation of painting with poetry. And in the light of the tradition of poetic inspiration, they were taken as evidence of the divine nature of the artist and of his art—his *virtù*." As Summers puts it: "To conceive and realize—or perform—ever more difficult things was a sign of election and of spiritual progress."

The notion of fantasy, of mental and formal creativity as the crucial sign of election, dominates Summers's discussions (even in the second part of the book devoted to "Order") as it seems to have dominated Michelangelo's thoughts throughout his life. Most of the other concepts in Summers's account circle around *fantasia* as their focal point and it is this insistence on the central importance of fantasy—at the expense of more classically balanced systems of art—which gives his

analysis its force and psychological conviction. It also explains further why Summers eschews detailed critical assessment of individual works of art, which could only give us a limited and partial insight into the artist's creative fantasy. Summers seems to suggest that we should look at Michelangelo's whole oeuvre, rather than at this painting or that piece of sculpture, as the most adequate reflection of his mind. The sparse illustrations to the book, which include only two details from the Sistine Chapel, none of the sculptures from the New Sacristy, nor even the "Moses" or the Florence "Pieta", show clearly that the author is relying on his readers' familiarity with Michelangelo's work.

If Summers's project is, as it seems to me to be, wholly justified and sound, the means he employs are sometimes less so. He repeatedly makes the point that this is necessarily a hypothetical reconstruction of Michelangelo's thoughts. Michelangelo, unfortunately, has left us with only a relatively small number of statements about his own art. Summers has had to rely heavily on sources close to him, among them Cellini, Vasari, Condivi, Varchi and Vincenzo Danti. De Hollanda has not found much favour with modern scholars, and whether the fact that he suits Summers's arguments well is going to endow him with more reliability remains to be seen. The author's reliance on Danti presents an equally serious problem. Danti's *Trattato delle perfette proportioni* is used throughout as a direct reflection of Michelangelo's ideas. Danti's own art was deeply influenced by Michelangelo's; yet the personal links between the two artists, as described in Summers's introduction, are entirely hypothetical. The possibility that Danti's ideas are consistent with Michelangelo's as we know them from other texts cannot be used

to endow his treatise with more authority than those other texts have. After all, in the case of most of the other authors, at least we know that they had met Michelangelo.

These problems leave us with some doubts as to whether we are dealing with Michelangelo's own intentions or with those of a more collective *persona*: the circle of his friends, admirers, and generally sympathetic writers. Summers is quite determined that his interpretation of the different sources leads directly or indirectly to an understanding of Michelangelo's own mind. His interpretation, and his selection from the texts, is determined by a very forceful and persuasive assessment of the artist's character. Yet other scholars may entertain different ideas about Michelangelo's personality and may consequently select different texts.

This may be an unavoidable problem for all historical reconstructions. But another problem which adds considerably to the difficulties of the book could have been avoided. In his attempt to define the precise meaning of the terms and concepts which dominated Michelangelo's thoughts, Summers adopts the stance of a traditional historian of ideas. Each term is followed from its origins in classical antiquity, mainly in Plato and Aristotle, through its modulation and variations by the Church Fathers and the Christian Middle Ages, to the beginnings of the Italian Renaissance, and to Michelangelo's own time. In itself this is quite interesting and extremely informative. Yet it does not help us much to understand what must have been a very active and powerful individual mind: we cannot assume that Michelangelo had read as much as Summers has, and we also cannot assume that the concepts and words as used in the sixteenth century still carried with them all the definitions and meanings

attached to them over the previous centuries and millennia. Overshadowed by the history of ideas, Michelangelo's mind remains somewhat abstract and elusive, removed from its own social and intellectual environment.

Summers argues that Michelangelo's language of art, and hence his thoughts, were to some extent archaic, intellectually retrospective. This may be so, although one suspects it is in part simply the result of Summers's own retrospective approach. If we extended his history of ideas beyond the sixteenth century, and followed the modifications and variations of his terms and concepts over the following few centuries up to the present day, we would probably get a different impression. We might even gain a better understanding of why it is that Michelangelo's art continues to have such a powerful impact. But in any event, with such an approach we would still be substituting a historical perspective extending over several centuries for the workings of an individual's mind.

Michelangelo and the Language of Art will remain an indispensable, and probably the best, account of the intellectual traditions leading up to Michelangelo. One hopes that it will serve as a starting point for the further reconstruction of the actual historical situation, of the intellectual, artistic, and—in the widest sense—social circumstances within which Michelangelo's mind worked, to which he reacted and from which he drew his inspiration. That we shall ever fully understand his thoughts, and his art, is more than doubtful, yet Summers's book is a convincing and very welcome demonstration that we can approach him in more fruitful and interesting ways than those offered by the traditional analysis of style and iconography.

Exploratory examples

By Keith Andrews

FRANCIS AMES-LEWIS:

Drawing in Early Renaissance Italy 196pp. Yale University Press. £15. 0 300 02551 3

Books on Old Master Drawings tend to be either catalogues (raisonnés or not so raisonnés) which deal mainly with the niceties of attribution and connoisseurship, or anthologies where the emphasis is on the illustrations. And then there are the surveys of the whole field, like Meder's monumental treatise (of which an English translation appeared three years ago) or James Watson's *The Craft of Old Master Drawings* (1957). Francis Ames-Lewis has done something novel in taking a comparatively small but significant field—the Italian Quattrocento—and illuminating the manner and purpose of drawing during this period. He concentrates on Tuscan, Central Italian and to some extent Venetian examples, for the simple reason that it is from these regions that most drawings have survived. He traces the development from model-books, such as those by Villard de Honnecourt, to sketch-books such as Pisanello's. The former ensured the continuation of a tradition in which the apprentices were brought up, while the sketch-books allowed for a gradual stylistic individualization. Both types were influential in the studio and their influences are evident in the many imitations of the master's style, so often now the object of delicate connoisseurship. Hence drawings were either the means of exploration towards an elaborate composition by a mature artist or, often at the same time, the example which the pupil attempted to emulate.

In the early days the material for drawings was mainly parchment, whose smooth surface lent itself particularly well for the fine details of silverpoint and for subtle experi-

ments in colouring. But, as Ames-Lewis rightly stresses, drawing was also used in preliminary work for fresco design on plastered walls; when it became possible to remove whole frescoes for their backing for restoration, many examples of these underdrawings (*sinopie*) were laid bare, if only for a short time. Often no more than outlines, they yet allowed one to recognize the individual hands of their creators.

The manufacture of paper as a commercially viable product emancipated the art of drawing: it was no longer necessary to adumbrate a composition directly on to a wall. A much more subtle and elaborate design could be prepared on thickish paper; detail by detail, it could be pricked along its outlines, and charcoal dust-pounded through the holes on to the surface to be painted. Furthermore, it became possible to graduate from the discipline of delicate silverpoint on parchment, which allowed of no correction, to the comparative freedom of chalk and pen. Although the author mentions more than once the special blue paper, *carta azzurra*, so prevalent in Venice and its environs, he might have explained that this originated in Arabia, and came to Venice through its lively trade with the Orient. Its presence there probably contributed to the Venetian artists' preoccupation with form and colour, in both their fully finished drawings and their studies for paintings, in contrast to the essentially Tuscan emphasis on linear studies, mainly from the nude. A good example—though outside the author's self-imposed brief—is the difference between Dürer's Venetian blue-paper drawings and the much more linear studies he made at home.

There is a most interesting chapter on the exciting, and often complex drawings which artists, for example Ghirlandajo, had to present to their patrons for approval, and it is here that Ames-Lewis's book most sensitively and perceptively makes its mark. In the introduction, attributions were not the concern of this study, one still regrets that he

did not take the opportunity to go into the vexed question of distinguishing the very similar drawing styles of Giovanni Bellini and his brother-in-law Mantegna. But he is most enlightening on the role which Leonardo played for both Raphael, who emulated his tiny rapid pen sketches, and Michelangelo, who gained his freedom in handling chalk from observing da Vinci's manner.

Ames-Lewis's insight into his chosen subject-matter is impressive; so is his simple and lucid presentation. His enthusiasm and real feeling for these early draughtsmen are very infectious and will no doubt commend this book as a kind of primer for students. It removes the subject from speculation and presents the facts, culled largely from contemporary sources. For once the footnotes are plucky (though some references to "Tietze 1948" refer in fact to Tietze's 1944 work on Venetian drawings) and there is a welcome glossary of technical terms.

As we have come to expect from the Yale University Press, the production is impeccable and the illustrations, some of which are not at all well known, are clear and have been placed close to the part of the text where they are discussed.

In *Italian Renaissance Painting* (484pp. Harper and Row. £17.50), James Beck follows his introduction, in which he provides a stylistic framework as well as an account of the origins of the emergence of the Renaissance style, with three chronological sections subdivided in each case under the headings "The Lyric Current" and "The Monumental Current". Included, as well as chapters on the work of painters such as Masaccio, Fra Angelico, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, Botticelli, Raphael, Michelangelo, Lorenzo Lotto and Correggio are accounts of the work of Francesco Squarcione, Sassetti, Francesco di Giorgio and Rosso Fiorentino. Reference is made to architecture and sculpture and their contribution to painting as in the works of Donatello, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi and Alberti.

On the time's own terms

By Norman Bryson

PHILIP CONISBEE:

Painting in Eighteenth-Century France 223pp. Oxford: Phaidon. £20. 0 7148 2147 0

The sub-title of Philip Conisbee's survey might well be "In pursuit of authenticity". Everyone will agree that there are such things as eighteenth-century French paintings; the problem is through which century's set of spectacles shall we look at them? *L'art du dix-huitième siècle*, published by the brothers Goncourt in 1875, set out to study Watteau, Chardin, Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze—so far, so good; this is our French eighteenth century too. But the Goncourts then went on, in the same breath, to name Saint-Aubin, Gravelot, Cochon, Moreau, Eisen, and Debucourt—hardly the way a list compiled today would continue. This quirkiness of the Goncourts' eighteenth century could be viewed through eminently nineteenth-century spectacles. Are we still using those spectacles today? Is our interest in Watteau, Chardin, Boucher, and Fragonard mere Romantic residue? Philip Conisbee believes that it is, that we must mend our ways and that the time has come to look at these paintings through period lenses. Anachronism is our enemy; historical vision is what we must strive for, and the only lens that will do to focus the century is that usually overlooked viewing aid which guided the viewer through the maze of the annual salon: the official catalogue or *livret*.

Painting in Eighteenth-Century France is a *livret* writ large. When we put its lenses on, the whole gallery changes. A new category comes into focus—religious painting. If we relied on the Goncourts we wouldn't even know it existed. There are new stars in the heavens, and in particular two of the first magnitude: Subleyras and Deshayes.

Pierre Subleyras is the French eighteenth-century's sacrifice to the most nineteenth-century. Perhaps the most

eminent victim of the Goncourts' censorship, he is a painter who, as the Goncourts understood the century, could not possibly have existed. A religious painter in the age of reason? An ascetic painter in the era of Boucher? Out of the question. Deshayes is the last star of the Salons of the early 1760s; cut off in his prime in 1765. If we think of the century as moving towards its climax in the "Oath of the Horatii" in 1785, or if we continue to look through Goncourt eyes, we will barely see these painters at all. We will miss Deshayes's passion, and Subleyras's strange theological stillness, which looks at first like Chardin, then like Zurbarán, and finally emerges as a unique and deeply personal vision. Looking at the Salons through the *livret* seems to restore our sight.

But then we encounter something of an embarrassment: official category two, history painting. It is never quite there; though not for want of trying—the ministers in charge of the *Bâtimens du Roi* were forever trying to promote the *tableaux d'histoire*. But the category of history painting is distinctly thin. Conisbee digs up what he can, but it is mediocre stuff, often painfully so. Its defects were clearly recognized at the time. Why else should La Font de Saint-Yenne and Diderot have written so urgently and polemically on behalf of a revival in history painting? The *livret* promised *tableaux d'histoire*.



"La Belle Strasbourgeoise" by Nicolas de Laigllière, from the book reviewed here.

them all together in a single volume. The tragedy is that, though he had accumulated a vast quantity of notes at the time of his death, Clark had not even begun either the general history of Roman eighteenth-century painting or the full-length study of Pompeo Batoni which he proposed to write; and there is no possibility that the editor, to whom all his papers were bequeathed, will be able to connect such complete works from his notes. In his preface, however, he does promise to us two things in the future: first, a *catalogue raisonné* of Batoni's paintings for which almost complete notes exist; second, a series of lists of the works of individual artists working in Rome during the period together with brief biographies and surveys of their development. This book is to be modelled on "Waterhouse's" *Roman Baroque Painting* with the important difference that whereas his lists only cover paintings in Rome, Clark's will apply as little to early eighteenth-century Roman painting as it does to the architecture and decoration of the same period, to which—pace Professor Nina Maffei—the term *barocchetto* seems to me much more appropriate. Should we perhaps try to define a *barocchetto* school in Roman painting?

The book is well produced and easy to use and the plates, though small, are clear and well chosen to illustrate the points which the author seeks to emphasize. I cannot resist quoting one of the (few) misprints, on p. 48, where the author is made to remark "how useful Bianchi was" in his use of small models for the figures in his paintings.

In a sense, however, it is disappointing, in that it consists solely of reprints of articles already published—though it is certainly a great convenience to have

Where were they? An embarrassing situation for the state: the goods did not match the *livrets*.

Embarrassing also for Conisbee. His method obliges him to give each *livret* category equal attention. The highest category, religious painting, has its gems. One is grateful to see them displayed. But the emptiness of the next category, history painting, is made all the more striking. No Subleyras here. So why should we trust the *livret*? The critics went out of their way to show their distrust. For Diderot the interesting paintings were always where the *livret* said they shouldn't be—in genre painting. Greuze, Chardin, Joseph Vernet. The approach works for religious painting, but not much else. French painting comes into focus in fact when we view it not with but against the *livret*. When we move lower down the hierarchy, towards what ought to be the dregs, instead of the dregs we find Greuze; or if we think Greuze actually is the dregs we still find Chardin. A Chardin now made to appear as some kind of mutant. To Goncourt eyes, unhampered by *livret* spectacles, he could be admired without embarrassment. But to Conisbee, *livret* in hand, Chardin has to be seen in the way the Académie styled him: painter of fruit and flowers. Watteau is relegated to the category called "Minor Genres". An excellent but hasty, apologetic account of Joseph Vernet is just about squeezed in at the end.

At the same time as Conisbee is trying to persuade us to view with *livret* eyes, his writing and the evidence of his senses are telling us not to. One wishes that he would have the courage of his convictions, and give Vernet and Subleyras pride of place. As it is, his desire for "period" vision forces him to pad out and generally inflate categories of painting simply because the *livret* declares them to be important. It is good to see Subleyras. It is always a pleasure to gaze upon Rigaud's "Gaspard de Quélen", with his *hacynthe mûrier*. But beware the throng of harmless, charmless works dug up in pursuit of *color*. When we are asked dutifully to imagine that just by looking at such paintings we will become truly authentic viewers, the only proper reaction is Diderot's irreverence.

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Chez Hobson and chez Gubbins

By David Bindman

Constable with his Friends in 1806. Facsimiles of four sketchbooks with a volume of introduction and commentary by Graham Reynolds.

Unnumbered pages. Trianon Press and Genesis Publications. £138. 0 904351 20 3

On May 29, 1802 John Constable wrote to his friend John Dunthorne that he had decided to return to his birthplace to dedicate his life to "a pure and unaffected manner of representing the scenes that may employ me", adding that "The great vice of the present day is *bravura*, an attempt to do something beyond the truth." Bold words for a young painter starting out in life, but he was not so young: only a few days short of twenty-six. Nor was there much in his art by then, or for some years later, to give credibility to his ambition, especially when one considers the early achievements of Girtin and Bonington. It is greatly to the credit of Constable's unlikely mentors Joseph Farington and Benjamin West, respectively Secretary and President of the Royal Academy, that they could see anything in him worth encouraging, other than his dogged determination. With hindsight, glimmers of his future achievement can be discerned in his landscape sketches and water-colours, but the large-scale public works of the years 1804-6, like the large Bridges family portrait group in the Tate and the Brantham altarpiece, (a meticulously rare exercise in religious painting), are disappointing, even by the standards of the Royal Academy of the time. Up to 1806, despite his avowed commitment to natural landscape, he had not settled on a particular genre, taking on portraits if he had customers and even exhibiting an episode from the Battle of Trafalgar at the Royal Academy, but by the end of that year, after his visit to the Lake District in the autumn, he had become irrevocably a landscape

painter, only occasionally accepting other kinds of commission.

Three of the four sketchbooks from the Louvre reproduced in facsimile in *Constable with his Friends in 1806* belong to the months immediately preceding the Lake District visit; their concentration on the human figure makes them a fitting conclusion to the first phase of Constable's career. Two of them record his visit to Markfield House, Tottenham, the family home of William Hobson, a building contractor and lapsed Quaker with sixteen children; the third records his visit, probably in August, to his Gubbins cousins in Epsom. All three contain a few landscape studies, but they are mostly filled with elegant, slight drawings of the Hobson and Gubbins families, concentrating on the adolescent girls. As drawings they are charming, but not of great significance beyond the context of Constable's career. The girls seem rather boneless and elongated, reminiscent of Fuseli, but entirely lacking eroticism. As Graham Reynolds points out in his excellent introductory volume, such a comparison is not accidental, for Constable continued to attend the life class at the Royal Academy, where Fuseli was keeper, until 1807.

The occasion for the two Hobson sketchbooks is not entirely clear. One possibility, among the number suggested by Reynolds, is that Constable might have been employed as a drawing master to the five teenage daughters but he had been warned by Benjamin West to avoid such a career and in any case he was only at Markfield House for a few weeks. Another possibility is that he was interested in one of the daughters, but the drawings do not show the concentration on one girl we might expect from a would-be lover. The most likely reason is that he was contemplating a portrait group like that of the Bridges family, which contained as many as ten figures, young and old. Certainly some of the informal groups in the sketchbooks look as if they could be incorporated into a group portrait, which might have been confined to the younger

members of the family. One composition that looks complete in itself is an adventurous drawing at the end of the second sketchbook, showing the mother or an older girl, reading a story to four of the children, pictured through an open window. As an idea for a portrait group it is strikingly original, but even Constable must have realized that he did not have the ability to carry it out successfully. In other drawings he has set the girls in the characteristic attitudes of the "fancy" portrait, almost always in front of a window looking out on to a landscape; two sisters embrace affectionately, or an older girl instructs a group of younger ones. Some drawings, however, do not seem to belong in this category, like that of an older girl, shown full-length and almost full-face, turning back as she opens a door.

Constable could, of course, have made the Hobson drawings merely for his own amusement, but somehow this does not seem to fit his rather censorious character as a young man. According to his uncle, writing about this time: "J. C. is industrious in his profession, temperate in diet, plain in dress, frugal in expenses, and in his professional character has great merit." In Epsom, on the other hand, he was a guest of relations and some of the sketches could be fleeting records of family parties, but even here there is a relatively finished study of his aunt Gubbins, perhaps a study for the lost portrait he is known to have made of her. The sketchbook also contains some rapid pencil drawings of the kind of sentimental genre subjects that would have seemed most false to him: a couple looking in horror at a distant shipwreck and a poor gypsy woman carrying a child. It is tempting to see in the rapidity of this sketchbook, and the curious stylistic disparities, an inkling of his own dissatisfaction with his art, which was shortly to achieve a renewed sense of purpose.

The Hobson and Gubbins sketchbooks make a useful and coherent group, even if they do not show



Portrait of Byron from *The Greeks: Twenty-four Portraits of the Principal Leaders and Personages Who Have Made Themselves Most Conspicuous in the Greek Revolution, From the Commencement of the Struggle*, an early nineteenth-century album of coloured lithographs by J. Bouvier after Adam de Friedel to be sold at Sotheby's this week.

Constable at his best. For reasons that are not explained, a fourth sketchbook from the Louvre has been added, not by Constable himself, but by his son Lionel Bicknell Constable. Lionel's separate identity as an artist has been brought to light by Constable scholars in the last few years and a selection of his work can now be seen at the Tate. He took up painting in the 1840s, teaching himself largely from the works of his father in the family house. He exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy between 1849 and 1855, then gave it up for other pastimes, leaving behind an *oeuvre* which over the years became inextricably mixed up with that of his father. Lionel was certainly talented and could capture something of the sparkle of his father's brushwork, but he was quite

without his father's depth or intellectual power. To reproduce Lionel's sketchbook, especially in monochrome, is an act of posthumous cruelty, for it leaves his drawing exposed in its essential amateurishness, revealing him as the kind of artist who, in his father's words about his own youthful self, goes "running after pictures, seeking the truth at second hand".

All the four Louvre sketchbooks are excellently reproduced in monochrome, which involves a certain loss in the case of the few water-colour sketches. The introductory volume by Graham Reynolds is impeccable in its scholarship and contains fascinating supportive material. Some reservations, however, are in order about the presentation of the material. All the five volumes, including the introduction, are beautifully bound and individually boxed, which must have contributed greatly to the high cost of the set. It might have been better to have included the very intriguing sketchbook, also in the Louvre, used by both Constable and Delacroix, instead of the one by Lionel. Grateful though one is to have the Louvre sketchbooks well reproduced, the whole venture hovers somewhere between scholarship and fine bookmaking, not being entirely satisfactory as either. By contrast, the facsimiles of the 1813 and 1814 Constable sketchbooks in the Victoria and Albert Museum, also edited by Graham Reynolds but published by HMSO in 1973, are models of unostentatious decency, and for all their Italian green cloth binding, much pleasanter to handle.

collections does not seem to have been checked by the authors for authenticity and dating, so that it is of very limited use. The works in sales are given neither prices nor buyers, although this information is usually easily available; and most of the illustrations have been supplied by dealers or the auction houses, so that the works cannot readily be traced. What the collector expects is basic biography drawing on the best sources, and a catalogue of authentic dated works of all periods in accessible collections. What *The Shayer Family of Painters* offers is an expensive example of hasty commercial book-making.

Keeping going

By Kate Flint

H. McCORMICK: Portrait of Frances Hodgkins. 159pp. Oxford University Press. £15. 0 19 547991 6

Frances Hodgkins was the first New Zealand painter to exhibit at the Royal Academy. Born into an artistic Dunedin family in 1869, she moved to London in 1901, and there, after remaining something of a traveller: the subjects of her later works were drawn from trips around France and England, Morocco, Italy, the Low Countries and back to New Zealand, and Australia. During her long career, her style reflects this physical restlessness. The earlier paintings, under the influence of her Italian teacher, Nerli, are whimsical and contorted landscapes.

B. H. McCormick has produced a competent study, well illustrated, particularly with personal memorabilia, which enables us to place Hodgkins in her social context. A fuller biography and *catalogue raisonné* are promised. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the book is the glimpses it offers of the financial penury of the artist, and the dependence on friends: the strain of running summer schools for amateurs, leaving no time for one's own creativity; the shabby nature of arrangements with galleries. Only in her last ten or fifteen years—she died in 1947—could Hodgkins be termed an experimental innovator rather than a follower. And only near the end of her life did her painting achieve enthusiastic acceptance in London artistic circles. This book makes it clear that assimilation into the cultural canon—a volume of the Penguin Modern Painters devoted to Hodgkins appeared in 1948—is slender consolation for the difficult life that preceded it.

The ministerial hand

By A. R. Birley

TONY HONORÉ: Emperors and Lawyers. 190pp. Duckworth. £35. 0 7136 1449 5

This concise and elegantly produced volume continues an interesting controversy about the role of the Roman emperor. Put simply, the question is: did emperors write their own rescripts? A considerable volume of imperial correspondence is preserved, principally in the *Corpus Iuris*, supplemented by inscriptions and papyri. Emperors had ministers, at first freedmen, but, starting in the later first century AD, equites, or "knights". The *ab epistulis* handled correspondence with governors, high-ranking persons, city councils, and the like, the *libellis* petitions from private individuals. By analogy with the practice of other rulers, it might seem logical to assume that these ministers were not mere amanuenses. But in an article entitled "Emperors at work", in the *Journal of Roman Studies* for 1967, Fergus Miller argued that "the picture our sources provide of the emperors dealing personally with people and communications" must be accepted, that "it was not merely an observable fact but a principle that Emperors should compose their own pronouncements, whether written or verbal". He concluded that it would be impossible to refute the proposition that "vast ranges of imperial business were handled by the bureaux, in private, systematically concealed from the view of our literary sources", but stressed that evidence for it was lacking.

Now A. M. Honoré seems to have provided it. His view, stated in the

introduction (which occupies pages vii-xv and reveals that the research for the book "was largely undertaken in 1972-3"), is quite different: "From an analysis of the style of these texts [in the *Code of Justinian*] I draw the conclusion that those who composed and were in large measure responsible for the content of 'imperial' rescripts were the lawyers who headed the office which processed petitions from private people on points of law... the office *a libellis*." Miller has in the meantime expanded his case in *The Emperor in the Roman World* (1977), where it appears that he was able to consult what sounds like another version of the work under review, an article entitled "Private rescripts and their authors, 193-280 AD", to be published in the *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. The relevant part of that unwieldy and increasingly irritating monument of *systematische Darstellung* seems not yet to be out, and Honoré does not cite the article here. None the less, Miller seems to have been sufficiently impressed by its arguments to surmise that "emperors now [ie, in the period covered by Honoré] tended to define the main tenor of a *subscriptio*, perhaps after consultation, and to leave its precise wording to be composed by the *a libellis*". It should be added here that readers of the *Journal of Roman Studies* for 1979 have already had the chance to consult a potted version of Honoré's case, under the title "Imperial rescripts AD 193-305: authorship and authenticity". Some parts of that article appear with little change in the present book.

Honoré's period is one of the darkest in the history of Rome. The literary sources are not merely poor, but contaminated—by the cunning fictions of the *Historia Augusta*: not just a contaminated source, Mommsen said, but a sewer. Yet the Severan now was marked by the culmination of Roman

jurisprudence in the persons of Papinian, Ulpian, and Paul, whose writings take up a large part of the *Digest* and *Code*. Clearly, exploitation of this material is vital for a proper understanding of the era. In practice, experts in Roman law and ancient historians have tended to work in isolation from one another, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world with its separate legal tradition. Honoré has worked hard to remedy this situation. In one or two places it seems that further consultation with historians could have improved the work. Thus on a text of Pomponius, stating that "ante tempora Augusti publice respondendi ius non a principibus dabatur", Honoré, rendering *principibus* as "emperors", comments that it is "ill-expressed... there was no emperor before Augustus". Yet surely Pomponius was referring merely to the "leading men" of the republican era; as Cicero said, in the good old days the *principes* kept in their own hands the *cognatio aequae interpretationis* of the law.

More serious, perhaps, is the determination to accept the "fable" (as Sir Ronald Syme has called it) that Septimius Severus himself had started his career as *advocatus fisci*, treasury counsel. It is a pity, too, that Honoré misinterprets Herodian to show that Severus' younger son Geta was left behind—at Rome, he seems to think—"while Severus and Caracalla campaigned in Britain". Herodian meant that Geta stayed within the province of Britain while Severus and Caracalla fought the Caledonians; and both he and Cassius Dio (and even the *Historia Augusta*) were well aware that both Severus' sons went to Britain in the years 208-211. On the other hand, the author's mastery of the legal texts is apparent on every page, as for example when he deals incisively with a much quoted passage from the *Digest* showing Marcus Aurelius at his conscientious best. Mistaken interpretations of the words *deliberare* and *dubitare* are firmly rejected.

Fundamental to Honoré's case is the attempt to distinguish, by detecting changes in style in the rescripts of the *Code*, the tenures of different secretaries *a libellis*. The method is carefully explained in the Introduction, and put into practice in Chapters 3 and 4, covering respectively the period 193-282 and 282-305. Chapters 1 and 2 deal with "The Emperor as Lawyer" and "The Rescript System". Of the latter it may only be noted that it should be read in the light of Wynne Williams's fundamental article on "The *libellus* procedure and the Severan papyri" (*Journal of Roman Studies*, 1974), which is cited in the bibliography but apparently not used. The majority of the *a libellis* of the years 194-295 (a total of twenty: the last ten years of this period lack sufficient rescripts; and there are also gaps for 217-222 and 260-282) remain mere numbers, but a few identifications are offered. The first two, it is argued, in office from 194-202 and 202-209, are none other than the great jurists Papinian and Ulpian. For Papinian there is some evidence. He is known to have held the *libellus* post in November of the year 200 and to have become prefect of the guard in 205. Ulpian is more difficult. He survived until 223, commanding the guard for the last months of his life, after a spell as prefect of the food supply. Only the *Historia Augusta*, in two dubious contexts, alleges that he had been a *libellis*.

There is a particular problem with the dating offered by Honoré: another man, Aelius Coeran, is recorded in the post (it would seem) by an inscription assignable to the period 198-205. Honoré has to conclude that this person was merely a *libellis* to the junior emperor, Caracalla. Not impossible; but already rejected by Syme,

in the journal of the *Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* (1980). The full argument is here set out that the rescripts of the period March 25, 202-May 1, 209 bear the hallmarks of the great Ulpian's style, well attested in the *Digest*. And it is not merely the idiom, but the outlook. The case looks strong, and Aelius Coeran alone cannot disprove it. There are two other, more tentative identifications (no 4, Arrius Menander; no 8, Herennius Modestinus) and one about which Honoré is fairly confident, his twentieth and last, Hermogenianus.

But whatever the verdict on the individuals may be—and one may reasonably hope for future epigraphic discoveries to cast a little more light on the identity of the *a libellis* at least from the Severan period—the achievement in this study will remain remarkable. New work on one of the most perplexing periods in the history of Rome is bound to benefit enormously from it. Furthermore, it will be difficult to believe that Roman emperors treated their *a libellis* as Frederick the Great treated his four cabinet secretaries, "forced to work all the year round like negro slaves in the time of the sugar-crop", as Macaulay put it. The whole of his description of Frederick at work deserves consultation by those who accept Miller's view of how Roman emperors behaved. "He applied himself to public business after a fashion unknown among kings... The highest functionaries under his government were mere clerks... Matters of which no chief of an office in any other government would ever hear, were, in this singular monarchy, decided by the King in person." Honoré has gone a long way towards demonstrating that the emperors from Severus to Diocletian, at any rate, were very different from the King of Prussia.

The taboo on trade

By R. P. Duncan-Jones

JOHN H. D'ARMS: Commerce and Social Standing in Ancient Rome. 211pp. Harvard University Press. £14. 0 674 14475 9

The view that landed wealth was the only respectable form of wealth was among the most cherished beliefs of the Roman upper class. Similar prejudices, when found in other agrarian societies such as the England described by Jane Austen, seem influenced by the social character of many traders, and by the belief that trade is too time-consuming to leave room for the pursuits proper to a gentleman. In the Roman world senators were forced to invest in Italian land; Cicero in a philosophical work preached against forms of wealth other than land; and Petronius makes the parvenu Trimalchio invest in land money he has gained from trade.

Was this taboo consistent, or did the Roman upper classes maintain a significant stake in commerce? Land and trade were not the only choices. Among other possibilities money-lending was important. Loans were an essential part of Cicero's milieu, and early twentieth-century England—tenders as well as borrowers—were often senators. Tacitus says that very senators were guilty under the terms of a decree which for a short time under Tiberius restricted money-lending. And the younger Pliny has no hesitation in revealing that some of his money was out at interest. In stable conditions lending money within the landed class was probably less risky than investing it in trade-based on Roman shipping.

As large landowners *par excellence*, senators were nevertheless committed to some involvement in trade; unless their land was farmed by tenants, the wine-crop that Pliny had to sell in a single year was big enough to involve large sums of money and a number of different dealers. Among the advantages of his Umbrian estate was the

ease with which produce could be shipped to Rome along the Tiber, and not surprisingly, the marketing of produce is among the main topics of the Roman agricultural writers. Our knowledge of Roman trade and of who participated in it is bound to grow with the number of underwater wrecks that are now being studied. But if a senator owned estates overseas, or further along the Italian coast, for whose produce the best market lay in central Italy, he would necessarily be involved in shipping it by sea. The fact that cargo bears a senator's name, however, may mean only that the amphora (not necessarily their contents) were produced on an estate owned by that senator. Such discoveries need not therefore imply that the senator was engaged in trade for its own sake.

Problems of this kind complicate our attempts to establish significant commercial involvement among the Roman upper classes. John D'Arms nevertheless makes a determined effort to throw light on the subject, in a study which contains a full account of the recent literature and makes worthwhile use of underwater archaeology. He discusses the ancient prejudice against writing of banalistic matters, which tends to conceal from us salient economic details of the time. To offset this bias in the evidence, bold conjecture is sometimes needed before we can assemble a list of senators involved in trade. Much depends on how we assess the relationship between senators and freedmen who bore their family name. Were freedmen who were wealthy enough to emerge as individuals in our sources working on their own account, or as agents of their former masters? Professor D'Arms suggests that many of the *negotiores* seen in the East under the Republic were working for patrons at Rome. Though money-lending is hardly dismissed here, the close links between money-markets in the provinces and the money-market at Rome offer an analogy for the idea of long-distance commercial links.

D'Arms also examines the Augustales, a local collegiate organization

without political power devised by Augustus to absorb ambitious freedmen. He suggests that most freedmen rich enough to pay the entry fee to the Augustales were likely to be in business on their own account. By contrast, freedmen buried in their patrons' tombs may have been employed by them (but the categories can overlap). Alphabetical lists of Augustales known individually at the two biggest Italian ports form a useful appendix to the book; they include previously unpublished evidence from Ostia. The parallel lists of wives suggest that most Augustales married outside the slave *familia* from which they came.

A chapter on villa-owners in Campania, while interesting, does not advance the main discussion as much as one would hope; and at times the hunt for evidence grows rather strained. It is unlikely that Pliny's friends, who preferred "honestatibus" to public life, thereby furthered their own commercial interests; their respectability in Pliny's eyes suggests that they were patrons of the landowning class.

And it is surely confusing the imaginary with the real to wonder, "how many freedmen associates Trimalchio's liquid assets were out at loan?" Perhaps more serious, to see significant meaning in the differences between the family names of Augustales and those of magistrates at Ostia runs

Song

from the Portuguese of Fernando Pessoa

Are elves or sylphs playing?
These rhythms of music, these shadows
Of sound, these breathings among pines
Float round; or are they curves in roads

From places never known to me? They
Are like someone disappearing and
Appearing among trunks of trees. Echoing
Something far away which never

Can be mine, these faint sounds—yet why?
Are bringing me almost to tears.
This tune so unique I ask if it
Is real? Or no more, than a sadness

Of evening, me, and pines? It dies,
And like a breeze losing its
Shape of sighs, is once more
A rustling only through the trees.

Geoffrey Grigson

the risk of treating small surviving samples of names as if they were complete. It does not seem that the cases of Cato the Elder and Trimalchio will always bear the weight of inference placed on them here. Cato was typical in his economic pursuits. Plutarch would hardly have singled them out for mention, and if the portrait of Trimalchio were the careful case-study of a rich freedman that modern scholarship would like it to be, contemporaries would have found Petronius' novel dull reading. But the more colourful examples of business enterprise among Roman senators (for instance, Crassus as property developer) do not always gain a mention here. Verres, according to Cicero, besides robbing Sicily of most of its art-treasures and much of its cash, went into textile manufacture and set up a dress-factory on Malta.

D'Arms notes that there was a steady trickle of sons and grandsons of freedmen into the town council, and beyond it into the equestrian class and even the Senate. This in itself meant a continual movement of individuals away from trade-based wealth and into the classes whose wealth was essentially land-based. But the overall tendency of the book is to argue that trade was more socially pervasive than the literary sources are prepared to admit; and the class formed by the Augustales was not so much inferior as parallel to the town council. The sometimes intricate webs of prosopographical, and archaeological argument which suggest trade connections for certain senatorial families may fall short of direct proof, but they are often suggestive. To repeat a point which D'Arms does not fully consider, however, any major landowner was likely to sell some produce from his estate, and the larger the landowner, the larger the sales might be. In the state of our evidence, this often makes it difficult to establish how far known senators moved outside their designated role as landowners and traders for the sake of trade. D'Arms's book nevertheless makes it less easy than before to claim any watertight separation in Rome between landed and commercial wealth.

Our friend Anthony

By Andrew Wright

N. JOHN HALL (Editor):
The Trollope Critics
248pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 333 26298 0

CORAI. LANSBURY:

The Reasonable Man
Trollope's Legal Fiction
227pp. Princeton University Press.
£10.80.
0 691 06451 1

To mark the centenary of Trollope's death this year, John Hall has put together a collection of essays on his work by twenty of his most acute critics, ranging from Henry James' funeral piece to an excerpt from a book published as recently as 1978. Presented in chronological order, the essays form a history of the fortunes of Trollope from his death to the present day.

It is possible to imagine, though somewhat faintly, how this volume might be regarded on the occasion of the bicentenary, a no doubt wet December in 1882, the archaeologist of anthropological-sociological-linguistic inclinations pawing his way through the rubble left after the latest and last world war, discovering an unravaged copy of *The Trollope Critics*. Trained in the latest scientific methods, which bear a curious relationship to those of one Hercule Poirot (whose inventor's play would doubtless still be running in a tent on the site of the St Martin's Theatre), our investigator might formulate such questions as the following as he examined his treasure - and come up with contradictory answers. Is Trollope a master of his craft? Yes (Gordon Ray, C. P. Snow); no (Bradford A. Booth, Lord David Cecil, Michael Sadleir). Is his focus on society or the individual? Society (J. Hillis Miller, Chauncey Brewster Tinker); the individual (A. O. J. Cockshut, David Skilton). Is he a realist? Yes (Gordon Ray, C. P. Snow); no (Hillis Miller, Paul Elmer More). Is he a stylist? Yes (Gerald Warner Brace, Frederick Harrison); no (James Kincaid, O'Connor). Is he a political novelist? Yes (John Halperin); no (Booth). Does he accept the mid-Victorian world view? Yes (Brace, Cecil, Ker, Sadleir); no (apRoberts, O'Connor).

Having gone so far, our hypothetical investigator might be pardoned for throwing up his hands in despair, but he would be wrong to yield to this temptation. A second look at *The Trollope Critics* would make him come to somewhat less disconcerting conclusions. For he would discover that, though there is no discernible progressive refinement of critical technique in the period, 1882-1978, some advances have been made. For instance, the narrator in Trollope's novels is now seen not as fully omniscient but as integral. Moreover, when there appear to be contradictions in the claims put forward, some of these can be understood in larger terms as complementary. Thus Skilton's argument that the narrator contributes to the sense of actuality in the novels by giving instruction on the way in which the narrative is to be understood, is not really the opposite of Kincaid's argument that the narrator constantly "invades" the action, as when art, and life, for Skilton and Kincaid are each making an ultimate claim about the representation of reality in the novels, though each is writing from a different standpoint.

That, as they may still be saying in 2082, is the good news. The not-so-good news is that the inescapable subjectivity of literary criticism is laid bare in the contradictory judgments set forth, for instance by Gindin and Hillis Miller on *Arcturion*. And one is driven to the conclusion, which is not so bad after all, that the quality of any literary criticism is a reflection, to echo James, of the quality of the mind of its producer. Some critics, even those republished here, are better than others.

His introduction follows:

ing in the footsteps of R. C. Terry. Hall presents a history of Trollope's posthumous reputation somewhat different from that set forth by Sadleir in his *Trollope: A Commentary* (1927). According to Terry - and Hall has filled in the picture considerably - Trollope did not suffer the deep neglect in the decades after his death that Sadleir supposed he did. Or if Sadleir was right, he was only half right: critically, Trollope was mauled for many years, but he was widely read, his books being re-issued in battalions even in the 1880s and 1890s. He was also praised by discriminating critics throughout this period of supposed slump.

But "the Trollope problem", which made itself felt in his own lifetime and which has been stated and restated by his critics, friendly and otherwise, seems further from a solution than it ought to be. This is a perhaps melancholy way of putting the point that advances in Trollope criticism are fewer than one might hope for. And it is hard to decide whether the influence of James' essay, later revised and reprinted in *Partial Portraits* (1888), has somewhat hobbled subsequent criticism by its very forcefulness, by its convincing deployment of evidence, above all by its air of regretfulness that Trollope was not Henry James.

It is a pity that Hall does not choose to indicate the direction of James' revisions of the essay for *Partial Portraits*, because they show that he hardened his position. In 1883 Trollope's great, his inestimable merit was a complete appreciation of reality; five years later the praise becomes faint and even ironic, for "reality" James substituted "the usual". Still, even after the qualifications, James' judgment remains among the most discriminatingly affirmative available. What Trollope critics do not always fully appreciate is James' stance and even mood as a critic; his strongest praise is seldom free from subacid modification or balancing stricture, and in the letters which he wrote to his contemporaries, even to friends to whom he was devoted such as Stevenson and Edith Wharton, he did not resist saying what he thought of by way of criticism of their work, though he was capable of swathing such opinions in many layers of equivocation.

"The Trollope problem" has been put in a number of ways, and it is instructive to consider James' formulation. In doing so one must proceed partly by inference and partly by conflating a number of the statements in his essay: how can a man who has no sense of his craft, who has the bad taste to interfere as narrator in the telling of his tales, who lacks "doctrinal richness", who is uneven as a writer and far too prolific, who has no sense of history - how can such a man succeed so well in delineating the individual conscience as in Septimus Harding, in achieving the refinement of critical technique in the period, 1882-1978, some advances have been made. For instance, the narrator in Trollope's novels is now seen not as fully omniscient but as integral. Moreover, when there appear to be contradictions in the claims put forward, some of these can be understood in larger terms as complementary. Thus Skilton's argument that the narrator contributes to the sense of actuality in the novels by giving instruction on the way in which the narrative is to be understood, is not really the opposite of Kincaid's argument that the narrator constantly "invades" the action, as when art, and life, for Skilton and Kincaid are each making an ultimate claim about the representation of reality in the novels, though each is writing from a different standpoint.

That, as they may still be saying in 2082, is the good news. The not-so-good news is that the inescapable subjectivity of literary criticism is laid bare in the contradictory judgments set forth, for instance by Gindin and Hillis Miller on *Arcturion*. And one is driven to the conclusion, which is not so bad after all, that the quality of any literary criticism is a reflection, to echo James, of the quality of the mind of its producer. Some critics, even those republished here, are better than others.

His introduction follows:

contemporaries is mainly negative; he did not make their mistakes; and his style reveals a "weakness of imagination". Even Tinker's broadly sympathetic essay, first published in the *Yale Review* in 1947, has its air of super-civilization ("perhaps no higher praise can be given than to call him companionable").

Then, as if stepping under the cold tap in the shower bath, the readers of Hall's collection are stirred by the bracing heterodoxy of A. O. J. Cockshut, whose powerfully argued study of Trollope, published in 1955, proved a turning-point. Since then a number of critics (James Gindin, Bradford Booth, J. Hillis Miller, Gordon Ray, David Skilton, C. P. Snow, John Halperin, James Kincaid among them) have helped to make a strong case for Trollope. All of them are represented in John Hall's book, which ends on an affirmative note with an extract from Juliet McMaster's *Trollope's Palimpsest* (1978).

Now Coral Lansbury, in her full-length study, *The Reasonable Man: Trollope's Legal Fiction*, has also made an original and welcome contribution to the understanding of Trollope, though like not a few others she has bitten off more than is readily chewable. Her well-argued and economically written book is divided into equal parts, the first being given over to an exposition of a hypothesis suggested by though not proposed in C. P. Snow's book. Lansbury makes a convincing case that in the seven years during which he copied documents at St Martin's-le-Grand Trollope became proficient in writing reports after the quasi-legal model developed by Sir Francis Freeling. In the *Autobiography*,

phy, Trollope railed against the slavery of this youthful employment at the General Post Office, but it did enable him to set out facts in a context of thinking that the world was congenial to him. For he prepared his reports on the supposition that the world was coherent, that problems were soluble, and that men were reasonable. Not that he himself was so optimistic - the reverse, rather; but this made for a *modus scribendi*. When Trollope learnt to put the desperate daydreams of his boyhood and youth into the framework he had acquired at the Grand, he was able to produce the unique amalgam which bears his signature.

To see the novels organized in the light of Trollope's immersion in the Freeing form of report is to see them anew and better, especially such works as *Orley Farm* and *Mr Scarborough's Family*, which turn on legalities. Lansbury argues, with much persuasiveness, that the travel books, which she reads with care and profit, occupy a middle ground between the official reports and the novels, an attractive way of putting these several voluminous works into the total picture. Of great interest likewise is her analysis of Trollope's biographical works.

Her chapter on Trollope's language, "devoid of unnecessary ornament and designed to 'persuade, not to impress'", sometimes claims too much, but there is a basic rightness about it. For instance, she observes that dialogues in the novels sometimes take the form of cross-examinations, even outside the courtroom and even outside other usual contexts in which contestation takes place. But I wonder whether it can be demonstrated that it is

"because Trollope recognizes the power of narrative that his feelings toward it are so ambivalent, because he appreciates its capacity to undermine the dominance of character".

In the second half of her book, Lansbury tries to deal with too many novels and does her cause some disservice. She gets herself hung up on a taxonomic hook. She wants to think of each of Trollope's novels as being organized in one of three ways: the single transaction with the single plot; the single transaction ramified by the introduction of one or more underplots; and the extended multiple transaction, ie, the development analogically into a wider frame such as *Barchin-shire*.

This is a complicated way of putting something which can be much more simply described. It is also to take up the matter which Gordon Ray has dealt with so authoritatively in the essay reprinted in the Hall collection. Lansbury appears not to have taken Ray's findings into account, and that is a pity. She gets herself into more deep water as she tries to relate Trollope's dramatization of women to certain feminist interests of her own. That Trollope was a man of his time is indicated by nothing so much as his conventional opinions about the role of women; that his actual and often unconventional findings were at odds with his opinions is indicated by the characterization of, for instance, Lady Laura Kennedy, Lady Mabel Grey, and - most notably - Lady Glencora Palliser. But *The Reasonable Man* has much explanatory value and takes its place among the works with which readers of Trollope will want to become acquainted.

DRAMA

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Boswell records an exchange over dinner between Garrick and Johnson about the journey to London made by the actor and his former schoolmaster:

Johnson humorously ascertaining the chronology of something, expressed himself thus: 'that [1737] was the year when I came to London with two-pence halfpenny in my pocket.' Garrick overhearing him, exclaimed, 'eh? what do you say? with two-pence halfpenny?' - JOHNSON, 'Why yes; when I came with two-pence halfpenny in my pocket, and thou, Davy, with three half-pence in thine.'

That hopeful but inauspicious beginning and the actor's subsequent rise from obscurity to fame, with "a nation to admire him every night", are the stuff of legend. But Garrick knew the transitory nature of his profession. In 1776 he wrote, "... he who struts his hour upon the stage / Can scarce extend his fame for half an age".

Although paintings, engravings and eye-witness accounts have preserved a clear and detailed description of his acting powers and style, Garrick's actual stage presence can only be a ghostly simulacrum. His most obvious memorials are the Garrick Club and the Stratford Shakespeare Industry. But present-day London clubland has little to do with the vigorous informal conversation of Johnson's Club or with Garrick's efforts to establish the social acceptability of actors, and the heavily subsidized Royal Shakespeare Company contrasts sharply with the commercial theatre run by Garrick.

Twentieth-century theatre historians, with a dedication equalling Garrick's own worship of Shakespeare, are completing a monument to the unrelenting industry and shrewd professionalism which underpinned Garrick's preeminence as manager and actor. The three-volume edition of his correspondence, Kalman A. Burnim's *David Garrick Director*, and the recent biography by George M. Karl and George Winchester Stone are now to be joined by a six-volume edition of Garrick's original dramatic works and adaptations. The first four volumes contain all the original works and adaptations of Shakespeare which can be authenticated. Yet to come are Garrick's versions of plays by Jonson, Vanbrugh, Southerne and others for the eighteenth-century stage.

This is the first attempt since 1798 to establish the canon and to publish an edition of Garrick's theatrical writings. It is an ambitious and considerable task, facing many difficulties over authentication, choice of text and effective presentation. The editors, Harry William Pedicord and Frederick Louis Bergmann, have done their job well, providing modernized texts and full commentaries giving the theatrical, autobiographical and literary background. It is now possible to follow Garrick through his career as a dramatist and Shakespearean adaptor.

While none of the "original" farces, entertainments or plays are likely to become permanent additions to the modern repertory, all are eminently efficient dramatic vehicles. Their value lies in what they reveal about Garrick's "temperament" and his approach to the London audience of his day, and in the way their limitations explain the importance appeal held by Shakespeare for Garrick and his audience. The play-

values exhibits sprightly clarity and professional facility coupled with an attachment to "morality and sense". Sensibly, the editors say that this gallimaufry of theatrical entertainments must "be read in the light of his total career as actor, producer, director, manager, playwright, critic and social lion".

Garrick was a great actor, whose managerial choices had a key influence on the direction taken by eighteenth-century theatre, but no great playwright. His shrewdness enabled him to answer public taste with striking success. He wrote four of the century's most popular after-pieces, *Leithe* (remarkably, his first work, acted in 1740), *The Lying Valet* (1741), *Harlequin's Invasion* (1759) and *The Jubilee* (1769). Frequently, no doubt out of haste but also because his conservative audience liked old pieces reworked, Garrick found inspiration in earlier plays. *Leithe* borrows its central idea and character from Vanbrugh's *Aesop* (1697), *The Lying Valet* follows the second act of Moliere's *The Newly* (itself based on a play by Hauteroche), *Mis in her Teens* (1747) is a lively but still close adaptation of Dancourt with borrowings from Congreve's *Old Bachelor*, *The Guardian* (1759) shifts B.C. Fagan's *La Pucelle* to England and invigorates it in the process, and *A Peep behind the Curtain* (1767) is one of many descendants of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*. While Garrick makes this material his own (though the editors pass over the troublesome distinctions between translation, free translation, adaptation and original play), his source is as much literature as life (he finds a character taking of his "fretful porcupine my wife").

Even when exposing the fashionable gambling and idiosyncies of the "Daffodils" in *The Male-Coquette* (1757) he is, in his editors' words, "successfully unoriginal". With a disarming but inaccurate enthusiasm, they also call it a "miniature comedy of manners" and Garrick a "master of manners comedy in the Restoration mode". But Garrick's two act "farces", designed to support the main-piece, were necessarily too brief to allow for any real development of theme or character. Even the highly effective *Don Ton* or *High Life Above Stairs*, which firmly attacks necessary marriages and the false sophistication of townlife, depends on modifying the asstringency of Vanbrugh and Hogarth with Fielding's generosity - the stability of public taste and the finally derivative nature of the comedy are indicated by its composition in 1756-57 and its performance, received with acclaim, in 1775.

Garrick's single full-scale comedy, *The Clandestine Marriage* (1766), was written in collaboration with George Colman (the editorial discussion and tangled question of the extent of Garrick's participation is exemplary). It cost the co-authors two years and much pain. Written with the strengths of particular actors in mind, a neatly turned plot places Lovewell, a kinsman of Lord Ogley, in the household of Mr Sterling, as the businessman's factotum secretly married to his daughter. Lord Ogley starts as a promisingly horrible and self-gratifying monster. However, in the denouement Lord Ogley turns up trumps, and Lovewell, poor but gentlemanly, triumphs over his merchant father-in-law. It is essentially a version of pastoral, dependent upon socially conservative attitudes while using the sentimental structures developed earlier in Steele's comedies.

Although there is a real justification in Garrick's often-repeated claim that he wrote moral and realistic comedy, both his vision and his morality are limited. When Boswell said that Johnson's eulogy on Garrick ended with an "anti-climax of praise" ("Is not his harmless pleasure very tame?") Johnson replied, "Nay, Sir, harmless pleasure is the highest virtue. Pleasure is a word of doubtful value; pleasure is in general dangerous, and pernicious to virtue; to be able to furnish pleasure that is harmless, pleasure pure and unalloyed, is as great a power as man can possess." Johnson inclusively catches

Bottled for public taste

By John Barnard

audience's and his own taste. Faced with the gross disregard of the unities in *The Winter's Tale* and the very un-Enlightenment manners of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Garrick salvaged both plays for his audience by creating quickly became an attractive double bill. *Katherine and Petruchio*, first acted in 1754, cuts out the Christopher Sly matter in the Induction, does away with the wager, eliminates much of the bawdy and many of the puns, and interweaves scenes from different acts, thus condensing Shakespeare's comedy into a fast-moving farce. In Thomas Davies' words, "The loppings from the luxuriant tree of the old poet were not only judicious but necessary to preserve the pristine trunk." When performed in 1756 along with the three-act *Fortz and Perdita*, which cuts out the embarrasments of the sixteen-year time-gap and the man-devouring bear by the simple expedient of giving the whole of Shakespeare's first three acts in an opening retrospective speech, Drury Lane was presented with a neatly contrasted and various Shakespearean evening. A farcical courtesan, putting the woman in her place, was set against the pathetic and spectacle of young lovers in "A Dramatic Pastoral", with the added attraction of Garrick's performance as Leontes.

An immediate reaction to this kind of re-tailoring might well echo the response of Garrick's long-standing enemy, Theophilus Cibber, who called *Fortz and Perdita* a "hasty Flash, or Hotch-potch". Garrick's modern editors reply by citing G. C. D. Odell: "We who sit self-righteously enjoying Verdi's Falstaff or Othello should not be too hard on Garrick, or the contemporary critics who did not wholly condemn him. But creating major operatic or musical works from Shakespeare (and the editors might have cited Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Britten in addition to Verdi), is another matter. In any case, Garrick's two operas were supported by second-rate music. Garrick's alterations do not transpose Shakespeare to another medium, but create viable vehicles for a specific company and a particular audience."

There is another reason why automatic condemnation is misplaced. Then, as now, Shakespeare's works were common dramatic property. The twentieth century has seen both a renewed scholarly concern with the establishment of Shakespeare's text and an unprecedented freedom with that text on the stage and elsewhere. The BBC or RSC may seek advice from Shakespearean scholars, but we can also see productions or adaptations as various as those of Orson Welles, Derek Jarman, Peter Brook, *Leontes* acted by a cast of five, and Glisgud's one-man *tour de force*. But even if it were not for the invention of cinema and television, modern theatre is essentially pluralist both in its aesthetic approach and its financial structure. In the Restoration version, and went some way towards restoring the original. But the opera's failure led Garrick to revive the play itself one and a half years later. This version, not published until 1773, which omits only 398 lines and includes a shortened version of the masque, is as close to the text as most modern productions, and was performed virtually every season for the rest of Garrick's career. A return to the Shakespearean original was no guarantee of success. A version of *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1759), remarkably close to its source if set against Dryden's *All for Love*, proved unpopular; yet surprisingly *Cymbeline* (1761), called by Johnson a piece of "unrelenting imbecility", was played on 102 occasions at Drury Lane after Garrick created a good acting-text. Clearly much of the success or otherwise turned on Garrick's own ability to create roles: Posthumus gave him a part he could exploit, but as Anthony, his person was not sufficiently important and commanding to succeed.

Although it was Garrick's constant intention to restore to the eighteenth-century stage as much as was possible of Shakespeare's own words, he was

can (where he is not misled by eighteenth-century emendations such as "Where the bee sucks, there lurk I"), subject to certain restraints: "obscenity" and "gibbous are minimized, the neoclassical antipathy to mixed plots and offences against the unities remains in force, and there is a preference for pathetic and for set-piece final speeches in place of the often terse brutality of Shakespearean tragedy. Garrick's *Macbeth* still excludes the Porter, is embarrassed by the witches, and gives the hero a dying speech. In the case of *Romeo and Juliet* Garrick kept more of the rhymes than had been customary, cut suggestive language, added a masquerade to Act I and retained the Oway-Cibber denouement, in which the dying Romeo recovers for a final pathetic exchange with Juliet. As is well known, Garrick's *Leontes* follows Tate in having a happy ending, cutting out the Fool, and bringing together Coriella and Edgar. On the other hand, much Tate is cut and its place taken by Shakespeare.

These alterations were meant to create a powerful part for Garrick and to restore what he thought possible of Shakespeare's words without departing too radically from contemporary notions of dramatic propriety. There is no real attempt to make Shakespeare our contemporary. What Garrick and his audience found in Shakespeare's tragedies was a strength of passion and a power of language denied contemporary drama. Johnson's "just representations of general nature" were what attracted Garrick and his public. Disfigured as his *Leontes* now seems, Garrick's interpretation departed from the tradition of Betterton and Booth by attacking the idea that old age was a subject for comedy rather than tragedy. As Pedicord and Bergmann say, "He felt he needed to present Leontes as violent as well as weak, as kindly as well as pathetic." Acting in his own version of the play, Garrick made a fuller Leontes comprehensible to his generation.

However, Garrick cannot be seen simply as an innovator held back by the limitations of contemporary taste. Hamlet, one of his great parts, was inherited from Betterton and Wilks. From his first appearance in the part in 1742, Garrick constantly cut, added to, and revised the text. In 1772 he created a final version, printed here from a preparation copy discovered by George Winchester Stone in the Folger Library, which at last, in Garrick's own words, "rescued that noble play from the rubbish of the fifth act." He have brought it forth without the Green-gill's trick and the fencing match. Garrick's "imprudence" met with applause and earned him no less than £3,426. 14. 0 in the last four years of his career. But while Garrick cuts in the fifth act did allow him to give a much more faithful version of the rest of the play, and to give the whole of the "Mouse-Trap" for the first time, he was forced to add dialogue of his own at the very end of the play, and to make Hamlet leave his kingdom in the hands of Horatio and Laertes. Garrick's alterations in this case clearly reflect his own taste. When he writes in a prologue,

Let then this precious liquor run to waste,
This now confined and bottled for your taste,
To lose no drop of that immortal man
Garrick insists too heavily on the distance between his own and his audience's sensibility. Garrick's own plays and his adaptations of Shakespeare have a complementary relationship. Taken together they reveal a great deal about the symbiotic relationship between a great actor, manager and contemporary taste: while Garrick was able to change his audience's perception of Shakespeare and to stage sense and comedy as opposed to lavish spectacle and farce, he could only do what the audience could be persuaded to bear. His entrepreneurial success depended on his own taste being in advance, but not too much in advance of critics and the

Inwardly interesting

By Paul Hamilton

DAVID MORSE:
*Perspectives on Romanticism:
A Transnational Analysis*
310pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 333 28296 5

This book doesn't underestimate itself: if it "has a single concern it is an analysis of the trajectory of Western culture from the Reformation to the present, in which relativism and the development of multiple perspectives has threatened long-established notions of correspondence and truth". David Morse regards himself as correcting Foucault and Derrida, both of whom he claims, failed to realize the degree to which the "discourse" of the Romantic period anticipates post-structuralist theories of the arbitrariness of cultural signifying practices. He attempts to prove this by drawing on a wide range of sources, organized under various headings, in which this arbitrariness appears to most advantage.

In the opening discussion of "Romantic Discourse", eighteenth-century theories of language and of the subject are shown to move towards the positions of increasing uncertainty about the coherence of the psyche. Next the book charts a "transformation" from Protestantism to Romanticism, suggesting that a "reformation" in poetic inwardness, results from this distrust of traditional forms of media-

tion, and fuels the Romantic imagination.

Morse's book is ambitiously comparative, and it would have been good to have had his ideas on the influence of different Protestantisms, say on Holderlin in Germany and Coleridge in England, as well as on the peculiar contribution of Dissenting Protestantism to English Romanticism. But the book tends to shy away from such detailed discriminations, as it also does from discussion of the traditional view that Romanticism finds its true resting-place in religious and political orthodoxies of some kind. The book assembles much evidence useful for scotching this view, but does not take account of that anti-Dissenting literariness that extends through Burke and, paradoxically, Hazlitt, to Matthew Arnold.

Morse provides a massive inventory of excerpts from works which are generally conceded to be relevant to the subject of Romanticism. He seeks to avoid what he describes pejoratively as A. O. Lovejoy's "nominalism", and looks for "the unity" behind Romantic appearances. Sometimes the effort of managing so much material enervates his conclusions; and this, I think, points to a deeper problem. In a chapter on "Romanticism and the Infinite" he produces variations on this theme from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* to Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* by way of, amongst others, Goethe, Byron, Holderlin, Keats, Kierkegaard, Hoffmann, Kleist, and Baudelaire. There is a resemblance between Romantic impatience with the pretensions to imaginative adequacy of individual genres in the face of infinite possibility

and Pater's dictum that "All art aspires to the condition of music". Yet more important characteristics are inevitably elided in the comparison. The radical drive of the Faustian or Byronic hero's distinct from Pater's appreciation of the "Mona Lisa", a relish so fantastic its aesthetic generosity that it scarcely needs to touch upon the real world at all.

Baudelaire no doubt mediates between the two positions, but he cannot make entirely the crucial shift from heroic moral dissatisfaction to imaginative self-sufficiency - nor the political difference between the two, which Morse's book frequently ignores. His "transformational" or perspectival readings tend to catalogue examples of relativism and then explain no further. Yet this consciousness of arbitrariness is shared by different forms of writing which exploit it for different purposes. Morse thinks that Romantic aesthetics evades its own implications by conceding that "the structures created by the shaping spirit of imagination never fully correspond with structures actually present in the world". But he relies on a definition of the arbitrary so thorough-going that the disavantage of this correspondence is not obviously apparent; for the decision as to what constitutes the arbitrary should be as expressive of arbitrariness as any explicitly imaginary construction. Both sides, Romantic and mundane, have made their equally partisan choices; and it is the significance of these choices, rather than their possibility, which now arouses curiosity.

Awareness of arbitrariness can lead to scepticism or complacency, radicalism, or conservatism, democracy or elitism. It tells us nothing on its own, but takes shape and colour from the uses to which it is put. Language, absorbed by the Romantics from the putatively exclusive duty of communication to a situation, could now be prized explicitly for what Wordsworth called the "interest" or "feeling" it expressed. Morse's learned book is most valuable where it shows up Romanticism as the period in which the ideological consciousness became distinctively heightened. His forthcoming "structural" analysis of Romanticism will complement this book if it shows the extent to which Romanticism was also defined by the interests which it was used to represent.

Pony and Boy

the pony presses
its muzzle into the bark
of the tree blindly
as my boy, across the stream
leaning towards it, gazes

Clive Wilmer

A new Traherne manuscript

By Elliot Rose

The history of the rediscovery of Thomas Traherne in the present century is one of serendipity. It took two fortunate chances to bring the *Commentaries* to Bertram Dobell, and two more to enable him to identify the author. *Commentaries of Heaven* – the latest discovery – escaped oblivion narrowly. The manuscript – in a tight twentieth-century binding, the cover slightly damaged by fire but the contents in perfect condition and legible throughout – came into the hands of its present owner accidentally, in Lancashire about 1967, and after various attempts he had almost given up trying to find out anything about it. The Public Library in North York, Ontario, identified the hand as mid-seventeenth-century and the watermark as closely resembling one of 1649. That was all, until Brook Taylor, a graduate student in history at the University of Toronto, showed it to me. When I heard the story, summarized here, I thought, "Another unsuspected religious genius, like Traherne." I never imagined it was Traherne. But it is.

Commentaries of Heaven wherein the Mysteries of Felicity are opened: and All Things Discovered to be Objects of Happiness. Every Being Created & Increated being Alphabetically Represented (as it will appear) in the Light of Glory fills rather more than half of a substantial book, the remainder being blank. Nearly 200 leaves are written closely, two columns a side of mixed prose and verse amounting to a good 350,000 words and only bringing the alphabetical arrangement of subjects from "Abhorrence" to "Bastard" about a hundred entries later. No doubt the author left off his moral-

Metaphysicals no more

By John Roe

T. G. S. CAIN (Editor)
Jacobean and Caroline Poetry
An Anthology
334pp. Methuen. £9.95 (paperback, £4.55).
0 416 31060 5

Johnson, following Dryden, condemned poets like Donne and Cowley for "putting thought before feeling; but Eliot, following Orison, reversed the judgment, arguing that for Donne, at least, feeling was thought. The "Metaphysicals" would have basked in the phoenix-glow of ingenuity of a word that was so able to transform itself from a term of abuse into one of triumph. For such reasons Orison backed his hunch on it, though with misgivings; and with fresh efforts at justification so did Helen Gardner. Their two anthologies have remained the most successful at representing poets as diverse in temper and achievement, if undeniably of a common moment in sensibility, as were Donne and Cowley. Both editors chose the miscellany as the best means of accommodating authors of varying impact, and as a solution to the problem posed by a few extraordinary poems that outshine their creators.

T. G. S. Cain has broken with their practice on several counts, arranging his selection only partly by miscellany; dropping "metaphysical" because of the unwelcome pressure it puts on editors (eg forcing them to repudiate "Cavalier" lyrics); and emphasizing the historical context over previous anthologies' more internal or stylistic concern with the nature of lyric and "concept". The last of these moves is not as new as it might seem. Acknowledging the complex interrelationship of event, voice and time brings consciousness to poets who otherwise suffer when the only criterion is "individuality". But the intention behind this seems to be more to revive old reputations than to castigate the new. No plea is entered for the "metaphysicals" for Cavalierism, or the "metaphysicals" for Cavalierism.

Journeying souls

By Raman Selden

SHARON CADMAN SEELIG:
The Shadow of Eternity
Belief and Structure in Herbert, Vaughan and Traherne
194pp. Lexington University Press of Kentucky. \$16.50.
0 8131 1444 6

When a critic lists that the reader of Herbert's "The Agony" must "experience forcefully, though vicariously, Christ's agony," one realizes how effectively by comparison Louis Martz and Rosamond Tuve produce a receptive attitude in the reader without asserting the authenticity or truth of religious experience itself. By virtually excluding history, Sharon Seelig has made her task even more difficult: this book is a spiritual life of religious, social and political currents and pressures. The various groups of poems are presented as the formal expressions of the poets' souls.

learned author, in his *Court of the Gentiles*. . . "late" seems to be used here in the sense of "modern, recent". Gale, who outlived Traherne, published the work in 1670.

This dates the *Commentaries* to the most productive period of Traherne's life, which may help to explain the abandonment of the project, though its copiousness is reason enough. While the title describes the author's intentions, it hardly puts any limit on the subjects to be treated. One heading is "All Things", and several headings seem to be mainly starting-points for meditations on Traherne's favourite subject, Felicity. Hardly classifiable in any literary genre, the work tells us more about the author's religious views than anything else. There are sections on "Acceptance in God", "The Second Adam", "Ambassadors" (about the clergy) and "Atonement". But there is "Aristotle" as well. And while Traherne excuses himself from explaining the techniques, as distinct from the moral significance, of Arithmetic, because adequate books exist already, "For our Designe is only to supply y^e Defects of Learning as much as possible," he does discuss recent experiments on Anis.

The quality of the writing perhaps comes out as clearly as anywhere under "Alone".

There is a Property in ye Soul of man, whereby he cannot endure to be alone, & yet loves to enjoy a Kingdom or a Crown by himself, abhorring Rivals Sharers & Competitors, as much as Death & Desert Solitariness. . . Were he in Heaven, if there were no Specta-

tor nor Lover there, he would be weary of y^e place. A Kings Palace would be but a Prison to Him, a Paradise a Wilderness, and all the Ermines Crowns & Scepters, Rubies Scarlets Gold & Silver in y^e Earth but unprofitable & cumbersome vanities. Nay verily tho he hath all y^e Glorious Unives in its Admirable Beauty, Magnificent Structure, Brightness & Order, variety & Delight to entertain him, y^e Glorious presence of y^e Sun, & verdure of all y^e Stars, y^e Splendid Motions of all y^e Beasts & fowles & fishes to him wld signify Nothing, neither wld y^e very Perfections of his Body, & y^e Excellencies of his soul be any other y^e a Diseases unto Him. . .

For this Cause GOD hath filled the Earth wth Inhabitants, Incarnate Angels, Terrestrial Delights, Amiable & Marvellous Creatures, prone to lov and delight in us. . .

In verse, Traherne is seen in the manuscript in different moods. He is satisfied in "Affairs":

The Weighty Affairs
Of Plackets & Players
Now busy y^e Heads of our Great ones.
But even to name
The Sordid Employments of neat ones.
Feathers & Ladies & Laces Carry
Both y^e Shame & y^e Business of State.
More familiarly, there is the meditative "All Things":

Heaven! Lord is not y^e an Endless Sphere
Where all thy Treasures and thy Joys
If y^e be Heaven, it is Everywhere
The Earth's a Prison, & a Paradise:
Unto y^e Holy its of Endless Price:

ist Milton to appease the young T. S. Eliot.

On the whole, this selection achieves its ends, allowing that no anthology ever completely satisfies anyone (I personally miss *The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn*). It introduces the younger reader to ten poets who ought to be seen more often in each other's company. The tactic of discarding "metaphysical" therefore works, even if it leaves the book with a very appealing title; while the boundaries assumed by previous editors have been encouragingly extended; making possible a fresh valuation of groupings and reputations. But I have so far neglected the poets of the "Miscellany", and wonder if that doesn't reflect a fault in the volume's overall structure. The collective weight of the first ten poets, even though it brings Herrick

A Dungeon to y^e y^e y^e (sic) live in vice. . .

All Things were Adams, & all Things are our
Our Suns as bright as his, our Fruits & Flowers
As Sweet & Good: Nought's Blasted but our Powers. . .

A good deal of the verse is merely facile; the author's pen, as he seems eventually to have realized, ran away with him. Even so, Traherne's admirers will be grateful for this new insight into his mind and, in terms of sheer volume, the most substantial writing of his that is yet known.

There is only one direct autobiographical detail in the work. Under "Baptism", Traherne mentions a discussion of Anabaptism he had with John Tombs, "the great Ringleader of that Sect", in Leominster: "where having the advantage twice to meet him I both times asked him the same Question, & both times received the same Answer, that the Jews were under the Covenant of Works, but we under the Covenant of Grace. Use of Place could be for Sacrifices in a Covenant of Works, he was both times as Blank, & mute as a fish". Tombs was ejected from Leominster in 1662, but he was a Trier and Ejector for Herefordshire in 1667, when the twenty-year-old Traherne was appointed to the living of Credwell. It seems entertainingly possible that he was supposed to be grilling Traherne on his theology, rather than the other way about.

The owner has deposited the manuscript on long-term loan in the Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, at the University of Toronto. Ways of dealing with the massive task of editing and publishing the work are under consideration.

The national internationalism

By D. C. Watt

FRANK A. NINKOVICH:
The Diplomacy of Ideas
U.S. foreign policy and cultural relations, 1938-1950
253pp. Cambridge University Press. £15.
0 521 23241 4

This brilliant but misleadingly titled book might well serve as an illustration of the degree to which even the ablest American historians of American foreign policy ("diplomatic historians" in current American usage) have become locked into their own culture and victims of its ideological if often creative misuse of language. To begin with, Professor Ninkovich is only marginally concerned with diplomacy, his theme, rather, is the bureaucratic struggle in Washington over the formulation of a policy for the conduct of cultural relations with the non-American external world. Diplomacy, an art not a science, is, however, concerned with the conduct of negotiations and the accurate reportage of the actions and transactions of foreign governments to which the diplomat is accredited. To study even its simplest form, bilateral diplomacy, the diplomatic historian needs therefore to be familiar with the archives of at least the two countries with whose relations he is concerned. He must know the actual as well as the formal decision-making processes in both countries, as well as the degree to which each is sensitive and responsive to "public opinion" (the nature of which in each country he must also understand). He must in fact be familiar with the political "cultures" (to use a word with whose many different meanings and ambiguities Ninkovich continuously plays) in each country. And in the twentieth century at least he must be aware of the transnational elements in each and the degree to which, irrespective of the public defence of its own government's "foreign policy", each political culture is sympathetic and open to influences from its equivalent in the other country. With such issues Ninkovich hardly deals at all, except briefly

when he is discussing the wartime debate in Washington, and between Chungking, about cultural policy towards Kuomintang China. His theme is the debate over the role cultural relations should play within general relations between the United States and the external non-American world. It is a fascinating story and a well-told one; but only Ninkovich's cultural Americo-centrism can create the historical irony he perceives in his account.

This irony for him lies in the movement from what he calls the "liberal internationalist view" of international cultural relations, which aimed at the creation of the "liberal ecumene", to the state-controlled, ideologically oriented American nationalism of the Cold War. In the earlier phase, control and activity were in private hands, with the great foundations leading in association with national professional bodies such as the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Library Association and so on, and related at an international level to the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations. In the latter stage, the State Department Cultural Relations department fought to gain control over UNESCO, while subsidizing through clandestine channels (which included private foundations) organizations such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom and its publications. "Cultural internationalism was now an instrument of national policy. The educational system was successfully turned to Cold War political war. UNESCO was persuaded to carry out American foreign policy and independent liberal intellectuals were mobilized into a militant force for ideological combat against the Communist conferees." And yet, Ninkovich continues, there was a nearly unanimous insistence that "very little change of consequence" had occurred. Educators continued to act in the belief that they were being non-political. "UNESCO stalwarts" were convinced they were defending internationalism "rather than playing the dummy to the State Department's ventriloquist". The liberal intelligentsia believed it was defending cultural freedom rather

than the State Department's manipulation of that freedom. "In 1938, there had existed a correspondence between internationalist beliefs and their political and organizational uses. But now ideal and reality were held together by illusion, so whereas the original Division of Cultural Relations was created with a scrupulous regard for voluntarist and internationalist principles, by 1950 the cultural programs were pursuing an aggressive new diplomacy in which the rhetoric of idealism marked the pursuit of power. . . Private interests no longer dominated – in their place stood an ideologically inspired bureaucracy."

Ninkovich is, of course, far too shrewd an observer not to be describing a genuine change, in the partial bowing-out of the large private by a variety of state agencies. He also notes that American intellectuals viewed the Cold War as a genuine struggle between intellectual freedom and democracy on the one hand and Soviet totalitarianism on the other. "American ideals", he writes, "were regarded not as epiphenomena, but as causal agencies in their own right." The fact was that "intellectual freedom in the USA was culturally circumscribed as 'freedom of ideas took a populist shelling'. American liberal ideals demanded a means of isolating American beliefs as the only way of defending them."

With all these propositions a sympathetic "liberal" observer of the United States would to some extent agree. But from the start he would part company with Ninkovich's form of analysis. Liberal internationalism, as a movement, had originated prior to the First World War with the high-bourgeois culture of western and central Europe (and with its Anglo-Saxon extensions – which reached as far as the Alleghenies). Its basic assumption, and that of the incipient transnational society which it fostered, was the absence of any major ideological conflict. There were conflicts at the national level; but they could be adjusted, as they had been throughout the nineteenth century by their fathers and the aristocratic conservatives with whom

they were assimilating, to create the European culture and society of which Keynes wrote so brilliantly in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. This culture was overthrown in 1914 by the emergence of integral nationalism, which first appeared as the final ploy of European despotism and its supporters, then as the justification of the seizure of power by the defeated. But integral nationalism, the ideology of those who, excluded from power by monarchy and aristocracy hoped to inherit it through war, was not the only ideology to emerge from the ruins of Europe's greatest civil war. More far-reaching in their effects were Wilsonianism, Bolshevism and the new elitist anti-European nationalism and pan-nationalism of the non-European world. Of these Wilsonianism, the intellectual content of which came largely from the English radicals of the ODC, was the most immediate in its impact, adding to its borrowed plumage an absolutist doctrine, a denial of legitimacy to any other political system it dealt with, and a determination to use American power to impose its solutions upon its partners.

This Wilsonianism masqueraded as internationalism. What Ninkovich never asks is how far the "internationalism" of his pre-1938 private system of "cultural diplomacy" differed from Wilsonianist "internationalism". It was, to begin with, anti-political, millennialist and missionary, save towards Europe. European "centralizing nationalism" was to it an awful warning of the world that had to be changed. Towards Latin America, every North American believed the United States had a "moral mandate". It was elitist, believing in cultural pervasion (and thus vulnerable to United States populism). Most of all, by 1938 it was "internationalist" only in the sense that it accepted the reality of an external world which the United States could not ignore. While impenetrable, its doctrines could be found in Europe, they were more muted. By 1938 no European state, and precious few European political organizations believed in American internationalism, least of all in the cultural field, France, Germany,

Italy and Britain saw cultural relations as the projection of a national linguistic culture, and as part of national policy. Under such circumstances American "internationalism" was as American as apple pie. Its internationalism was the projection into a national culture which lacked a linguistic base (since culturally it was English-speaking and came late on the scene). It lacked too a basis in what current modes of thought would have called a "racial heritage", as well as a generally recognized style in the non-verbal arts – music, painting, architecture and so on. America's real cultural ambassadors came from Hollywood not Washington: the real image of America held by non-Americans, an image of social mobility, simplicity and wealth open to all, was so potent that it was more than any propaganda against which European intellectuals, after sneering, so often succumbed.

In brief Professor Ninkovich's dichotomy is false. Its falsity is doubly apparent when the "cultural diplomatists" are examined. These are not a double class, one half in the employ of private philanthropy, the other faceless career bureaucrats from some Kafkaesque ministry of culture. They come from a common class, with a common education, and within the tradition of American political administration they move back and forth between the American universities, the foundations and the employment of the state, in response to political, economic and cultural compulsions. Among these compulsions are genuine, non-American, inimical ideologies, whose tyrannies are of an order undreamt of in Ninkovich's cultural relativism. American diplomatic historians should constantly have before them the lines of Browning – "What shall they know of England, who only England know" – and break out of their stultifying cultural isolationism, which can make even a book so carefully researched, so imaginatively constructed, so clearly written as this come perilously close to the merest of exercises in "eyeballing the navel".

A gem set in garbage

By Jim Potter

EDWARD K. SPANN:
The New Metropolis
New York City 1840-1857
546pp. Columbia University Press. \$25.90.
0 231 050 844

By the middle of the nineteenth century, New York was, in size, one of the world's great cities. Its population in 1850 already exceeded half a million; surpassing all European cities except London and Paris. By 1860 the twenty-two square miles of Manhattan Island had over 800,000 inhabitants, a population greater than that of twenty of the thirty-three states of the Union. If Brooklyn and other suburbs are included, Manhattan was the centre of a metropolitan area of well over a million people.

Great it was in other respects also, at least in the view of Fernando Wood, its mayor, in 1855-57:

Our city is a great empire – great in its extent – great in its population; great in its wealth; great in its commerce; great in its splendour; great in its pretensions; great in its religious sanctity; great in the quantity of vice, destitution, and wretchedness which pervade its streets; and great in the variety of its social classes and the national characteristics of the world combined into one community.

Edward K. Spann's work, from which this citation is taken, is a comprehensive study of all these things of New York's "greatness", and of many others besides. The two

decades of his study were exceptional dynamic even for a city whose very name has come to symbolize frenzied activity and restless energy. Already in 1850 three New Yorkers out of five had been born elsewhere, in America or in Europe; by 1860 forty-seven per cent of the city's population was foreign-born, including over 200,000 Irish and over 100,000 Germans. These were million toils, however, since the two million and a quarter million immigrants entering the port of New York between 1840 and 1855 (that is a daily average of over 300) created a floating population of unknown size, a vast band of rootless transients.

The author responds magnificently to the challenge of this splendid subject. His 427 pages of text are supplemented by nine brief statistical appendices, a comprehensive bibliography and seventy-five pages of notes (which no reader should neglect). Each chapter is appropriately illustrated with contemporary lithographs and paintings.

The book is arranged topic by topic rather than chronologically and the chapters might be read in any order. If there are any themes which dominate a work so encyclopedic in its scope, they are: territorial and numerical expansion, the sheer mechanics of existence, the contrasting extremes of wealth and poverty, and the complexities of government in such volatile circumstances. A central chapter is significantly entitled "Manhattan Survival Machine".

The doubling of New York's population between 1845 and 1855 was facilitated by the opening of the Croton water system, bringing fresh water to Manhattan via forty miles of pipes and aqueducts. Indeed by the

latter date per capita water consumption was estimated at three times that of London. To the advantage of tap-water was added that of coal-gas. Coal was brought in mainly by canal and the New York area was soon consuming one-third of eastern production.

The need to expand food supplies was met by a vast enlargement of the catchment area, made possible, especially after 1845, through rail-road building; already in 1851, for example, hundreds of surrounding acres were devoted to the production of tomatoes, a vegetable almost unobtainable a decade or so earlier. Sea-food was a major item of diet, one estimate showing 50,000 people engaged in oyster-raising in 1854. Milk consumption increased six-fold between 1841 and 1853 (a mixed blessing since swill milk was seen as a factor in the rise of infant mortality).

The cholera epidemic of 1849 focused attention on public health and seventy miles of sewer were laid between 1850 and 1855. Nevertheless in 1856 there were still only 10,000 water-closets in the whole city and in 1859 only one-quarter of all paved streets had sewerage. With 22,500 horses pulling public conveyances, and countless more in private use, the problem of manure disposal aggravated that of the human detritus deposited "in courts, alleys and cesspools and in the streets and gutters to rotify in the sun [sending] out [its] poisonous miasmas to engulf the city and destroy life". The death rate rose alarmingly, from one in forty persons in 1840 to one in twenty-seven in 1855. In 1856 the records show only 16,191 births against 21,658 deaths (14,809 of children). Given the extraordinary

wealth of the city, the author describes New York as a "sparkling gem set in a pile of garbage".

Among the attempts to improve the environment the most lasting legacy of this period was the creation of Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park, setting aside five hundred acres of "People's Park" from other encroachments.

The more affluent were already fleeing the city towards suburbia. The author sees this as the American attempt to maintain the Jeffersonian ideal of the independent landed yeoman in urban surroundings, finding a prophet in George Henry Evans who remarked "This country cannot be a republic till every man can live in his own dwelling". What made the move possible was the steam engine, in the form of ferry services to Jersey City, Hoboken, Williamsburg and Brooklyn, providing New York's first mass transport. In 1860 the East River ferries alone carried 33 million passengers.

The wealth of New York, which the author links directly to Californian gold, found expression in the building boom of the early 1850s. In the private sector magnificent mansions and ostentatious business premises were built in the public sector, schools and hospitals were hastily provided, dock facilities improved, streets paved and widened, avenues extended.

These public improvements were only achieved at the cost of severe political tensions as well as institutional innovations, described in detail in chapters entitled "The Trouble with Politics", "Tammany's City", and "Tyranny, Tammany and the State". The author sees New York

(not, it might be noted, F. J. Turner's "Frontier") as the "hot-bed of American democracy", with urban politics "a refuge and an instrument of the ambitious poor".

Frequently throughout the book the reader reflects on how little has changed, how much could be reproduced as a valid comment even in 1982. Let one extract suffice, written in 1853:

"The more noise, the more confusion, the greater the crowd, the better the looker on and on-lookers seem to like it, and the world from the match-boy to the gentleman of leisure, resort to see the confusion, the uproar, and the sights while all enjoy it alike. The din, this driving, this omnibus-thunder, this squeezing, this jamming, crowding, and at times smushing, is the exhilarating music which charms the multitude and draws thousands within the whirl. This is Broadway – this makes Broadway. Take from it those elements, the charm is gone."

The Papers of Henry Clay, Volume 6, edited by Mary W. M. Hargreaves and James F. Hopkins, has recently been published (L1448pp. University Press of Kentucky, £35.00/\$105.00). The volume covers the year 1827, during which Clay, as Secretary of State in the Adams Administration, was closely involved in Latin American and Anglo-American tensions on the Canadian border and elsewhere. Domestic political issues included the Congressional and presidential elections, and bribery and corruption. The publication of this volume marks the retirement of the editors from a project which they instituted in 1952.

Foundations and forms of life

By Eckart Förster

RÜDIGER BUBNER:
Modern German Philosophy
Translated by Eric Matthews
223pp. Cambridge University Press.
£18.50 (paperback, £5.95).
0 521 22908 1

"The German or a priori view of human knowledge... is likely for some time longer (although it may be hoped in a diminishing degree) to predominate among those who occupy themselves with such enquiries, both here and on the continent." Thus wrote J. S. Mill in his *Autobiography* more than a hundred years ago. Since then, the impact of German philosophical thought on the Anglo-Saxon world has diminished in a way which must have far exceeded Mill's hopes. Recently, however, this trend seems to have been reversed, and there are now signs of a growing interest in phenomenology, hermeneutics, the tradition of dialectic and critical theory.

At the same time, philosophy in Germany itself has undergone rapid transformation. Not only has it lost much of its unified character, but it has also increasingly absorbed influences from abroad, most notably from the analytic schools and the philosophy of science. And yet what is perhaps most striking about modern German philosophy, as revealed in Rüdiger Bubner's survey, is the extent to which the adaptation of contemporary positions, be they analytical, scientific or dialectical, is carried on what might still be called the "German or a priori view of human knowledge". Even today, the two great figures of the German tradition, Kant and Hegel, are never far from the centre of the debates.

Bubner distinguishes three main currents under which the various positions can roughly be subsumed: phenomenology and hermeneutics; linguistic philosophy and theory of science; and dialectic and the philosophy of practice. The phenomenological school, dominant since the first half of the century but now becoming increasingly unfashionable, has itself undergone a development from a Kant-inspired beginning in Husserl's search for "new foundations for pure logic and epistemology to a neo-Hegelian position in the hermeneutics of H.-G. Gadamer. In its original logical concerns, phenomenology had much in common with linguistic analysis. But it was the growing preoccupation with language itself which, more than anything else, has permitted insights from the analytic position to be readily assimilated. Wittgenstein's conception of the "language-game" as a "form of life", in particular, received a warm welcome from those who had insisted with cadence on the irreducibly linguistic character of our relation to the world, or from those who had accustomed themselves to think with Husserl of the "life-world" as the "forgotten foundation for science".

Nevertheless, the product of this assimilation is more than the sum of its ingredient parts, as may be seen from two positions which Bubner discusses, namely K. O. Apel's "transcendental pragmatics", and the "constructivism" of P. Lorenzen. Apel, for instance, finds it imperative "to think with Wittgenstein against Wittgenstein and beyond Wittgenstein" and to overcome the relativism in the conception of the language-game. He endorses Wittgenstein's point that one cannot follow a rule privately, that one cannot know something as something save by being a member of a linguistic community and by taking part in an interpersonal process of agreement and interpretation of signs.

Against Wittgenstein, however, Apel holds that in the learning of one language-game each speaker also acquires the competence to reflect critically on his own language and thus to anticipate a later language-game, in which unlimited consensus would be possible. This, he claims, is the essential function of language: to serve as a medium for the self-critique of a community and to assume implicitly an idealized and idealized status in which the speaker and hearer have the same competence to reflect critically on their own language.

analysis has much in common with Habermas's conception of the "ideal dialogue", but where they part company is in Apel's belief that reflection on the conditions of possible understanding in a communication community leads to something like a transcendental point of "ultimate foundation" (*Letztbegründung*) of philosophy. Such an ultimate foundation is reached, according to Apel, if no argument for or against the rules of the ideal language-game is possible without presupposing them.

The foundations with which Lorenzen is concerned are, by contrast, not arrived at through reflection but are consciously laid to secure methodologically controllable discourse. Dissatisfied with the lack of normative elements in the procedures of hermeneutics and the analytical philosophies of science, Lorenzen proposes to take seriously an old motif of Kant's, namely that we only really understand what we ourselves can produce. The fundamental idea of his constructivism is to make our own thought and speech transparent by introducing, in a rigorously methodical way, all those concepts and procedures which are important for a particular realm of discourse. Beginning with such elementary operations as the exemplary introduction of predicates and names, the language is gradually enriched to allow for the formation of elementary propositions and the introduction of logical particles, which is done in terms of assertions in a dialogue-game which are

challenged by an opponent and defended by the proponent. The rules of the dialogue permit and control the introduction of all necessary concepts, activities and procedures in a methodically ordered advance from one stage to the next.

In recent years Lorenzen and his followers have extended the original programme and have tried to lay constructive foundations not only for logic and ethics, but also for empirical sciences like physics and sociology. Under the name of "proto-science", they have begun to develop non-axiomatic, constructivist theories which normatively define and legitimate the concepts and procedures employed in the associated sciences.

These attempts to lay a priori foundations for empirical sciences have provoked a comparison with Kant's transcendental philosophy, but have also attracted considerable criticism. Bubner's presentation of the position is marked with scepticism. He not only doubts the possibility of a quasi-presuppositionless starting point for construction, or the identification of rationality with method, but also denies any transcendental implications of Lorenzen's procedure.

Such implications are also denied for Apel's position. In this connection, however, Bubner raises two general objections which seem to be directed against any transcendental theory in terms of a linguistic community. Any reflection on the conditions of possible knowledge, Bubner insists, must start

from a given concept of knowledge; and if it is, as any transcendental enquiry must, to seek out the necessary conditions of knowledge, then these conditions must also be conditions of the reflection itself; as Bubner put it, the transcendental argument must be "self-referential". But this link between the reflector and what is reflected on is severed once a communication community is substituted for the original Kantian subject. There is no room left for a transcendental enquiry because "the communication community does not reflect on itself consistently, as a kind of collective subject... but a philosopher approaching from the outside points to certain normatively characterized premises...". If, alternatively, the argument is analysed merely in terms of the logical structure of self-reference, then no ultimate foundation can be realized. For if the condition in question is also a condition of the transcendental reflection itself, then any attempt to conceive of an alternative to this condition will result in "the experience of running up against a limit. There is nothing in this experience, however, to show that the limit is one of principle, or that the principle is unique...".

These objections seem to be mistaken. If linguistic agreement with others is necessary for knowledge, then Kant's transcendental self must indeed be substituted, but only by someone who can be a member of a linguistic community, i.e. an empirical person of flesh and blood, not by the community itself. All reflection must still be done

by each individual thinker for himself even if this process can no longer be understood as a solitary act in principle independent of any intersubjective agreement and interpretation.

Bubner's second objection does not seem to fare any better. How can we establish the "uniqueness" of a condition of knowledge? One way of doing this is by considering an alternative, i.e. the condition, and by attempting a proof, e.g. by *reductio ad absurdum*, of the conception's internal incoherence. Ultimate foundation or not; if the proof is valid, the condition is established. And this exhausts the field of possible alternatives to this condition. For although one may imagine different conceptions based on the negation of the original condition, this would not add to the number of alternatives. The proof will have to be self-referential in Bubner's sense, if the condition in question is indeed necessary for knowledge. But this structure is not consequential, and cannot be interpreted as indicating a limitation of the proof.

An introduction to contemporary German philosophy is overdue, and Bubner's book meets this need. It is subjective and often provocative, as is to be expected from an author who himself plays an active role within the tradition he describes. This makes the book all the more lively and readable, and if it makes the reader want to consult some of the original texts, it has achieved an important purpose.

AUSTRALASIA AND ASIA

Modernization and marginalization

By David Lowenthal

J. N. JENNINGS and G. J. R. LINGE
(Editors)
Of Time and Place
Essays in honour of O. H. K. Spate
296pp. Eurospan. £6.75.
0 7081 1453 9

O. H. K. Spate is a Cambridge-trained polymath of German ancestry whose first scholarly bailiwick was the Indian subcontinent; his massive *India and Pakistan* (1954) remains an incomparable regional geography. He left LSE in 1951 to become Foundation Professor of Geography at the Australian National University's Research School of Pacific Studies, subsequently becoming that School's Director, while at the same time fostering the development of geography in other Australian universities. Spate's long and productive career has carried him beyond both India and the Antipodes; his *Spanish Lake* (1979), the first volume of a projected history of the Pacific Basin, is a widely acclaimed masterpiece.

Of these essays by Spate's former students and colleagues, all but one are substantive rather than methodological, with themes highly localized in space and time. They are grouped in four sections, the first and the last concerning Australia, the others South-East Asia and the Pacific (mainly New Guinea and Fiji). The Australian studies focus on settlers' visitors, and advisers' impressions of that land, and on its empty heart. But only R. L. Heathcote's study of how arid land experience has affected Australian conservation policy conveys any general impression of land or life. Peter J.

Rimmer's "The British Expert Committee", recounting responses to three nineteenth-century engineers sent out to make recommendations for Australia's railway and port systems, illuminates the age-old Australian ambivalence toward British heritage and hegemony. But essays on early nineteenth-century agricultural settlements in northern Australia, on migrants' reactions to shipboard life and their first antipodean impressions, on the Australian research of an early twentieth-century Czech geographer, and on an abortive Western Australian mining boom, these topics, whatever their intrinsic interest, make no cumulative impact not only because they are heterogeneous but also because they are essentially antiquarian. Australia's size and lack of coherence seem to engender geographical research that fully details local particulars but eschews general commentary or reflection.

The exotic essays, whether on late-nineteenth-century Bangkok or forest degradation in New Guinea, seem fuller and more satisfying, perhaps because smaller-scale and more densely-peopled scenes are more easily encompassed, or perhaps because their authors are concerned with tracing continuity and change. How present farm-settlement patterns derive from earlier sugar estates in Fiji, for example, is the theme of R. Gerard Ward's "Plus Ça Change... Plantations, Tenants, Protestations or Peasants in Fiji", which also shows that "independent" peasant farmers remain under close company control. For me Heathcote's essay, together with those in the third section, "Change in the Third World", detailing the often harmful consequences - usually unforeseen as well as unintended - of development in tropical islands, offer the greatest rewards of this volume.

The lamentable impact of Westernization on the Bomogai-Anglo, a remote Papua New Guinea community penetrated by Europeans only since 1958, is outlined in William C. Clarke's "At the Tail of the Snake" - a local image which symbolizes both their rusticity and their marginal location. National goals strongly favour rural development, the reduction of economic inequalities, and subsistence agriculture; none the less, economic advance has had precisely the opposite effect on the Bomogai-Anglo. The growth and concentration of commercial agriculture, notably coffee, has reduced secondary forest, hunting, and subsistence orchards, and set in train ecological degradation. The move from a subsistence to a cash economy has upset the traditional roles of men and women, leading to what Clarke terms "class formation" between the sexes. Two decades of progress have diminished the administrative and social services that are locally available. "The aid post... has retreated to... a day's walk away. The Anglican no longer visits. The walking tracks are falling into disrepair... and the school has closed." Such marginalization, "inevitably attendant on modernization and economic development" the world over, was intensified as the Bomogai-Anglo "became remote rather than romantically recent". Local ambivalence reflects their ambiguous relationship with central authorities who "should perhaps aim not so much at making the country like the town", Clarke concludes, "as making the town like the country".

The impact of agricultural development in Papua New Guinea as a whole emerges in Diana Howlett's "When is a Peasant Not a Peasant?" Even though land is still abundant, the introduction of a cash economy has led to regional inequalities that

leave people in effect landless, because the land they have cannot provide them with an adequate cash income. The indigenous takeover of expatriate plantations and the employment legislation of the 1970s have speeded the recruitment of rural labourers in the villages. Whether they will remain a segment of the peasantry linked to their class and tribes by periodic return, or become a distinct proletariat, will depend on how enduring such removals are. But as in land-poor Third World countries, landlessness, poverty, and marginalization seem likely consequences of rural "development".

The promised benefits of tourism for Papua New Guinea as a source of foreign capital, a supplier of new jobs, and a boost to local culture strike D. A. M. Lea as sadly delusive. Travel to and within Papua New Guinea is expensive, and few of the 15,000 annual visitors stay long. Tourist revenues go mainly to non-nationals; import "leakage" is around 40 per cent; jobs created are few and poorly paid, even counting artefact-makers, guides, beggars, and prostitutes. The social advantages of tourists are equally dubious: language barriers keep tourists remote from local people, while commercialization demoralizes and degrades local culture rather than enhancing it. Greater numbers of visitors would destroy the isolation and imperil the fragile eco-systems that constitute Papua New Guinea's truly unique attractions. Far from being a potential bonanza, tourism would increase dependence, aggravate inequality and diminish local resources.

Assessing Indonesian city planning, W. Donald McTaggart concludes that planners in Java plan, intentionally or otherwise, for the Westernized, monetized segments of society. New urban structures ignore traditional cosmological values and uproot distinctive, ethnically-based communities in favour of purely economic patterns of spatial segregation.

A welcome contrast to these disillusioned warnings can be found in Spate's own recommendations for Fiji. I. O. Lasaga, a former student of Spate's who is now Cabinet Secretary there, provides a roseate review of the application of Spate's comprehensive and incisive analysis of 1959. Spate stressed an evolutionary route to modernity, reducing emphasis on status and tradition in favour of individual fitness and training for employment. "Fijian society accepted this challenge and has responded positively to this prescription," Lasaga reports; "today Fijian institutions... aim to seek out and recruit Fijians on merit, not status." Fiji has evolved into a community of independent farmers who participate in the rural cash economy and profit from technical expertise while retaining many traditional allegiances.

The idiosyncratic flavour of Spate's own scholarship and personality emerge more clearly in his collected essays, *Let Me Enjoy*, than from the bare list of his publications given here or from T. M. Perty's "Personal Impressions". Erudite, incisive, articulate, he is an accomplished stylist whose satirical prose has enlivened geography in general and Australasian studies in particular for almost half a century. Few of Spate's followers match him in this respect: of the fifteen essays in the present volume only Bruce Ryan's "Oral Historical Geography", a well-argued plea for the integration of oral with written sources, exhibits much verbal felicity. But the great majority of the essays are highly readable, and all eschew academic jargon - or have had it excised by the editors.

A valediction to verificationism

By Neil Tennant

OSWALD HANFLING:
Logical Positivism
181pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £14 (paperback, £5.50).
0 631 10861 0

OSWALD HANFLING (Editor):
Essential Readings in Logical Positivism
248pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £5.95.
0 631 12566 3

Oswald Hanfling's *Logical Positivism* is a truncated history of a handful of important ideas. The first sentence quotes the verdict of the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*: "Logical Positivism is dead, or as dead as philosophical movement ever becomes." One might expect such a verdict to have been pronounced long ago, but the author has persevered. His justification is that the movement has left a mark on philosophy that is still very much in evidence today - the search for a theory of meaning, and a belief in the unity of science. The last sentence of the book in effect claims that Logical Positivism is of lasting importance. Yet, as Hanfling admits, the conclusions arrived at in his book are largely negative. How, then, are we to believe that a dead philosophy is a live issue?

What Hanfling has given is mainly an essay on the verification principle - a well-documented trudge through the writings of Schlick, Carnap, Ayer, Wittgenstein, Waismann and others. For the companion volume of eighteen articles and extracts, the emphasis is much the same, and Hanfling's introduction by and large summarizes the discussion in his main study. The latter is methodical and lucid but is disappointing in making several lines of Wittgensteinian appeals to ordinary usage. For some of course, this is perfectly in order, as it stands. Most of Hanfling's very comprehensive discussion is unexceptionable.

But it is also unexceptionable. Its steps are well known; only the arrangement is new. Hanfling appears to miss the chance of showing how the central concerns of logical positivism are still with us today. His often illuminating comparisons with the empiricists of old positivism's more recent legacy - the analytic philosophy of Quine, Ayer, and Popper - is and remains, in the

philosophy of language. His negative conclusions concern the minutiae of meaning analysis and epistemological reconstruction. He says little about the influence that logical positivism arguably had on the level of rigour in Anglo-American philosophizing - whether it be thought beneficial or no. Whatever its defects, logical positivism, as Hanfling discerns them, remains tantalizing - and perhaps attainable; "to explain the way in which meanings are intersubjective; to explain how empirical statements can correspond with empirical facts; and to accommodate the subjectivity of experience." It was a grand and suggestive set of principles. According to Logical Positivism, there are

two, and only two, kinds of meaningful statements. There are, firstly, empirical statements, verifiable by observation. These are the main repository of human knowledge. Secondly, there is a kind of statement, sometimes called "analytic", where truth or falsity can be ascertained by merely reflecting on the meanings of the relevant words.

The Verification Principle claimed that the meaning of a statement was (or was determined by, or resided in, or was understood if and only if one mastered) its method of verification. This method would be sensitive to logical-linguistic structure and would rely ultimately on one's effecting some sort of comparison of the most basic statements of the language with "reality" or "experience" or "the phenomenal structure" of the world. Logical analysis would reveal the structure of the world and would reveal that kinds of comparison or confrontation were in order. Metaphysical claims, religious beliefs, and perhaps even moral principles would be revealed by a corresponding criterion of verifiability as mere pseudo-statements, statements devoid of meaning. Carnap's thesis of reducibility held, moreover, that the various sciences from physics through chemistry to biology and psychology, shared not only a common method but also a common language. Some "narrow" or "physical" language would serve as raw materials for definitions of such diverse notions as length, temperature, acidity, homeostasis and neurosis.

There are three ways of getting at a grand edifice like this. One is to stand outside waving banners with slogans. Not being a sociologist of knowledge,

Hanfling does not do that. The second is to check from time to time as through a dry rot works its way through. This Hanfling has done assiduously, and we have his final report. But the third is to blast at its foundations. This is what Quine did in his famous essay "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", blurring the line between the analytic and synthetic, deeming every statement's truth value revisable in principle. Yet Hanfling breathes not a word of this to his reader. His critique by attrition does, however, encompass an exhaustive list of problems: that of formulating a criterion of verifiability (for deciding whether a statement is meaningful, rather than what its meaning consists in); the problem of distinguishing criteria of truth from mere symptoms; the problems attendant upon conflating conditions of ostensive learning with those of verification; the verification conditions of atomic statements, and of universal and tensed statements; why we must move from the passively given to the actively given in order to close the gap between sense-experiences and the reality of things; whether the process of verifying a single statement might ramify indefinitely; whether the overall theory can accommodate meaningful deliverances of introspection; and the problematic status of the verification principle within the language it concerns.

In his discussion of psychological terms, Hanfling does not explore a possible tension between behavioural conditions for their application, and physiological conditions that science might discover. Here he misses an opportunity to show the relevance of Davidson's insistence on the autonomy of the mental. Likewise, in his earlier discussions of the opposition between statements' immunity to doubt, and the Carnap-Neurath coherence theory, he fails to explore its possible resolution in Quine's epistemology and theory of meaning. The final chapter, on the accommodation of ethics, criticism, emotivism, Hanfling argues that C. L. Stevenson's view that moral judgments are really a combination of an attitude and an injunction does not accord sufficient importance to reasons, and to moral judgments as a source of action. But one is left feeling unconvinced that Hanfling has shut the door on a more sophisticated emotivism - one that weds a causal theory of belief, desire and action to a causal theory of value. It is not at all clear how such theory can account for knowledge of the moral status of an act, or for meaningful dispute about it.

Perhaps the most disappointing error of omission here, compared to the introduction to the companion volume of readings, is that Hanfling does not amplify his discussion of Reichenbach on morals.

Amid all the Wittgensteinian cautions about ordinary usage, a bold quotation from Carnap gets a brief airing:

A philosophical thesis on logic or language in contrast to a psychological or linguistic thesis, is not intended to assert anything about the speaking or thinking habits of the majority of people, but rather something about possible kinds of meanings.

A correct analysis of meaning can enjoin reform of logical and linguistic practice; or so Dummett has recently argued. His point of departure is an account of decidability of statements, of so-called canonical conditions of proof or refutation. Words have meaning by virtue of their contribution to detectable conditions of assertability of statements in which they occur. The meanings of statements are computed, according to their structure, from the meanings of their constituent words. In this way we can obtain decidedly meaningful yet undecidable statements: statements which, on the crude verificationist account, would be deemed meaningless. This line of thought has been pursued a long way in Dummett's writings. Hanfling does not signpost it; and once again misses a chance to show the relevance, to contemporary philosophy, of the thought that meaning is rooted in the observable.

The universe as onion

By R. H. Barnes

MA' BETISEK CONCEPTS OF LIVING THINGS
WAZIR-JAHAN KARIM:
Ma' Betisek Concepts of Living Things
270pp. Athlone Press. £16.
0 385 19554 2
NIGEL PHILLIPS:
Sijohang
Sung narrative poetry of West Sumatra
253pp. Cambridge University Press.
£2.50.
0 521 23737 8

How does an author deal with a culture in which conceptions of the world and of religious beings may vary strongly from one individual to the next? Several recent studies, such as Kirk Endicott's *Batek Negrito Religion*, have addressed themselves to this problem with analytic and descriptive flair in reference to aboriginal groups of the Malay Peninsula. Now Wazir-Jahan Karim suggests that anthropologists themselves may systematize cultural conceptions which actually lack any inherent order. The issue is an old one and turns on differing conceptions of what constitutes an explanation, but the author's conclusion conflicts with her own analysis of Ma' Betisek thought about plants, animals and persons.

The Ma' Betisek are the "people with scales", a name derived from the fishing they do along the Selangor coast - one facet of an economy which includes rice cultivation, hunting, gathering, and the extraction of forest products. In the past they have been more commonly known as Ma' Merit or Besit. Racially these people are difficult to classify, since they have intermarried widely with Negrito and Proto-Malay aborigines, so that they show as much individual variation physically as they do culturally. Their language belongs to the Austroasiatic family, but has been

Ma' Betisek Concepts of Living Things begins by claiming forthrightly to be a study of a system of ideas in contextual terms. Among the features of this system are the Ma' Betisek view of the universe as a seven-layered onion. The seventh layer is the home of transparent ancestral spirits, living humans inhabit the sixth layer, while cannibals and subterranean creatures live in the first five. Their ideology is further structured by two sets of ideas, designated as *tulah* and *kemall*. *Tulah* concerns breaches of standards of behaviour between juniors and elders, as well as violations of the moral code between the human world and that of plants and animals. *Kemall* means placing oneself in danger by breaking a prohibition associated with plants or animals.

The author tells us that these two spheres of thought are contradictory, but equally important. They are not formulated, and are coherent only when put into operation, though they relate to two different sets of myths. They also entail two opposing notions of hierarchy. In the *tulah* context objects are symbolically differentiated by their utility. Here humans are regarded as more powerful than plants and animals, which humans cook and eat. The author at this point confuses her analysis by associating Lévi-Strauss's opposition between nature and culture with the conker-cooked distinction, even though the Ma' Betisek do not have a general term to describe nature. Plants and animals, unlike humans, do not observe any moral code, and animals in particular are inconstant and eat one another. For this reason, the ancestors cursed the animals.

In the *kemall* context, plants and animals are superior to humans because they originate from the souls of dead humans and therefore have status as ancestors. They also possess the mystical ability to inflict illness and injury on humans. Such attacks may be motivated by wrongful damage or inconsiderate treatment of

In human, animal, or plant form may become spirit guides for shamans and aid recovery from sickness. *Tulah* and *kemall* pertain to different domains of experience, *tulah* attitudes being appropriate to economic activities, while *kemall* notions come into play in cases of illness or death.

In one way or another a similar dual interpretation of the world is familiar from most cultures and is certainly commonplace in South-East Asia. The two orientations are not so much in contradiction as systematically inverted, so that they make mutually dependent structures of meaning and value. The author overlooks this salient regularity in Ma' Betisek culture. She does however note other important constants, among them the association of numbers with good fortune, and even numbers with bad luck; the symbolic interchangeability of odd numbers; symbolic associations of black and white; as well as prescribed anticlockwise motion in ritual and dance. These preoccupations provide striking comparisons with other Asian societies. They are collectively shared and certainly remove any suspicion that the observer has manufactured an artificial order.

Sijohang is a narrative poem sung by the Minangkabau people in West Sumatra about the hero, Anggun Nan Tungga. Specialists recite and sing it for pay at weddings, house-building ceremonies and installations of lineage heads. Usually they perform only the more popular sections of a very long poem (Nigel Phillips himself recorded 40,000 metric "lines", requiring twenty-three hours of tape). His book gives us the social and literary context of *sijohang*, a description of local attitudes towards the story, and transcriptions of two episodes from it. The author also discusses linguistic and literary features of the poem, and variations between performances, and provides an extended summary of the full-length narrative. The result will attract the specialist rather than the general reader.

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